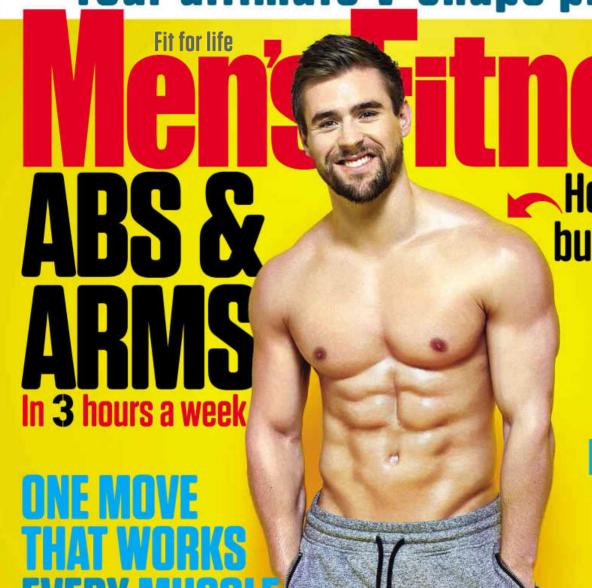
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How this man built this body

(against all odds!)

January 2016

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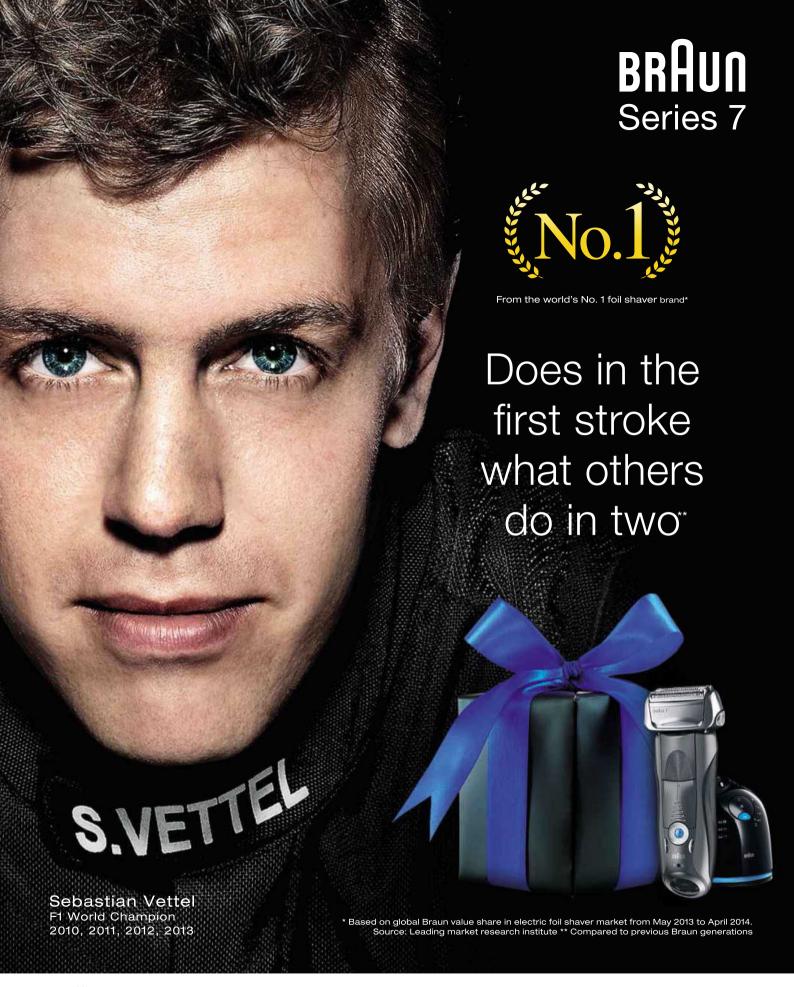
MAN OF TODAY

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 $\underset{\text{H U G O B O S S}}{BOSS}$

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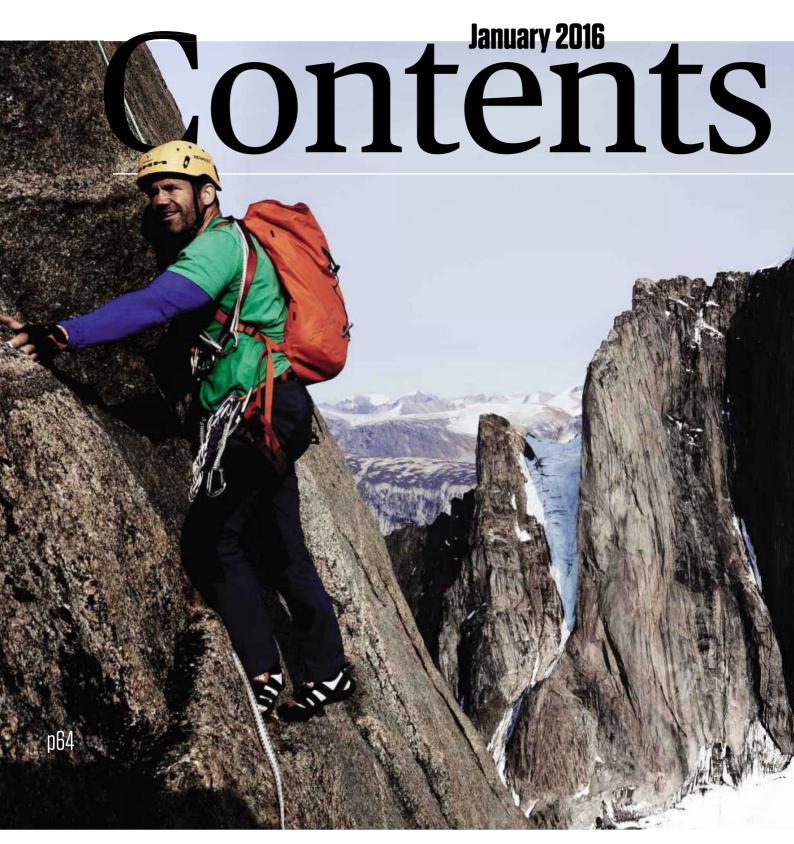




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On the cover

p58 Against the odds

Ben Mudge found his salvation in exercise. Now he's on a mission to inspire others to train - and who wouldn't want abs and arms like an *MF* cover star?

p64 **Be a better you in 2016** Whether you want to be fitter, get more adventure in your

life, create a revolutionary new business or do something to help others, find motivation here

p139 Build a V-shape

It's the classic body that men have strived for since antiquity. And you can achieve it with three workouts a week

p100 Seasonal foods

Christmas is a time to overindulge, right? You're probably expecting us to say "no" here. Actually, you can - if you pick your food wisely

p120 **Gym ball workout**

You don't need weights for a serious fat burn. Use a ball to fire up your furnace

p37 The big bacon but

Processed meat has been reclassified a Category 1 carcinogen. But what does this mean for your diet? MF investigates

p125 Get high

... with altitude training - coming to a gym near you soon. *MF*'s Sam Rider finds out if it can really cut your workout time in half

January 2016

Content

Updates

p15 **Acceptable in the 80s** Why are we fatter now, when there's a gym on every high street, than 30 years ago?

p21 **Take the challenge** Adventurer Sean Conway doesn't want to keep all the fun for himself - he's spreading the joy, and he wants you on board

p23 **Work every muscle...** ...with just one move: the blurpee. Think we've made it up? It's completely real - and entirely effective

Personal Best

p43 **Strong swimmer** Eddie Hall is a 28-stone strongman - and a champion in the pool. MF takes the plunge alongside him

p56 Survive the season The boss will never know you were out till 3am with our recovery tips

Fuel

p91 **The gadget you need** It's a spiraliser, and if you don't know why it's extremely useful for a healthy diet, read this NOW

p109 Curry love? How will a trip to your local Indian restaurant affect your health? MF nutritionist Drew Price looks under the sauce

Trainer

p115 Get slope fit

If you're planning a winter sports holiday, here's everything you need to know to make the most of it - and avoid coming back injured

p137 **Burning desire**Can you buy fat loss in a pill? We look at the best and worst supplements that claim to get you a lean body









Q: What inspires you?



Forty years old. If you look after your health and have good genes, with luck you're about midway

through your life's innings; so much done, but plenty more to look forward to. For Ben Mudge, this issue's truly inspirational *MF* cover star, 40 is it. According to doctors, at 25 years old, he's already past the halfway point.

But Ben has overcome the odds many times before and, listening to his incredible story, I'm sure you'll agree if anyone can prove the doctors wrong it's him. Born with cystic fibrosis, the Belfast lad began working out to beat the debilitating effects of his inherited condition, and he's gone on to build both an incredible body and a successful career as a PT. And now, of course, he can add the MF cover to his formidable list of

We spent weeks
considering many
brilliant and unique
individuals when making
the choice. But in the end
there was no better person to
lead our 'Get Inspired' issue.

Whatever your goals in 2016, we hope Ben's story will inspire you to reach them.

Joe Barnes, Editor

• aMF Barnes

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We are proud to announce that Coach is the new online home for all *MF* stories and workouts. Our expert team will be providing advice, tips, and workouts on all Coach's channels from now till the end of time.



IN THIS ISSUE

We asked three of our experts who inspires them



Steve Backshall

Dangerous animal specialist and jovial adventurer (see p64) "My greatest inspiration has always been and continues to be my parents. From a very young age, they encouraged me to embrace the outdoors and the natural world."



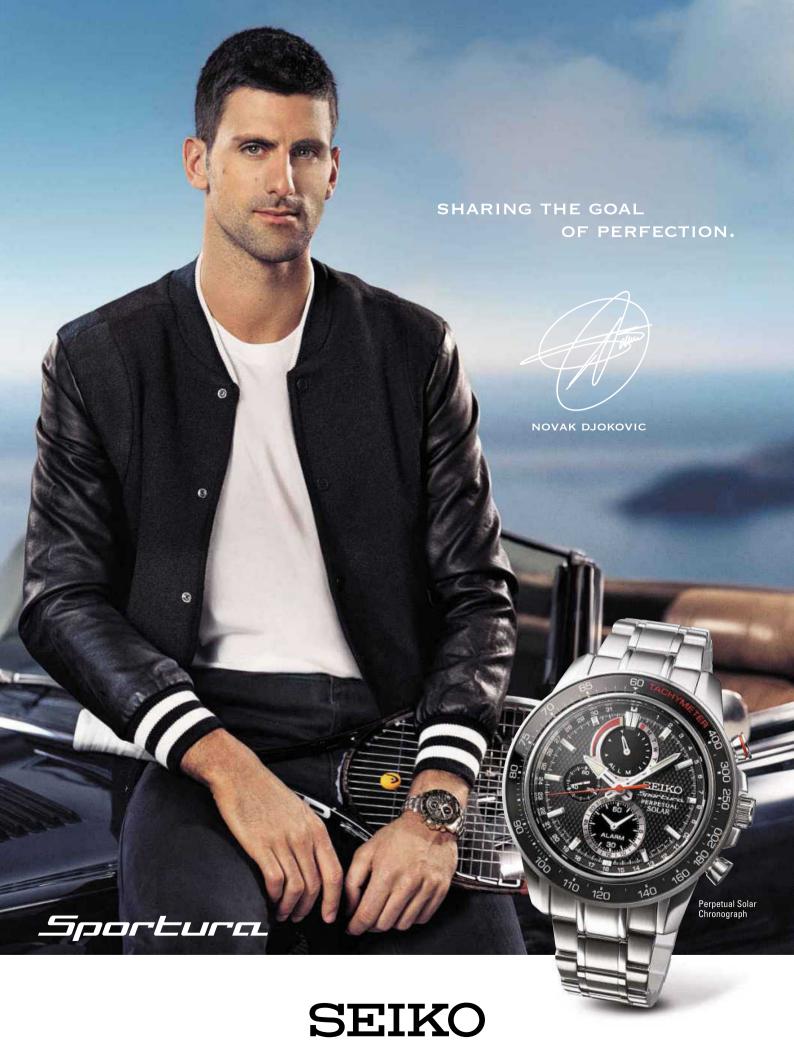
Rich Phillipps

Personal trainer and body transformation specialist (see p139)
"As a former basketball player it has to be Michael Jordan. He had unparalleled competitive drive and the mentality to convert negative experiences into a burning desire to succeed – that's something I try to live by."



Sean Conway

Extreme endurance athlete – and your new best friend (see p21) "I'm inspired by anyone who's sacrificed everything to achieve their dreams. Musicians. Athletes. Adventurers. Have a dream. Work hard to achieve it."



DEDICATED TO PERFECTION

HE MFERS

The staff and readers of *Men's Fitness* are always in the thick of the action



Joe. editor #behindthescenes

A quick apology to our amiable cover star, Ben Mudge (see p58). As we tried to get some quirky - yet powerful - images of him standing on a small chair, Ben was forced to listen to MF art director Will tell some of his "best" jokes as he attempted to coax him into a smilier shot. Ben, thanks for being a good sport.



Joel Snape, associate editor #Fundamentals

I helped out at the Gym Jones Fundamentals seminar - so instead of doing horrible circuits like Tailpipe and Jonescrawl, I was yelling at other people while they did them. Plus, with GJ's Rob "Bobby Maximus" MacDonald screaming at me, I also managed a PB 212kg deadlift.



Sam. fitness editor #highhopes

Altitude training is more accessible than ever, with Virgin Active kitting out their gyms with oxygenfiltering hypoxic chambers for you to get out of breath in. Training masks like this one also claim to mimic the effect for improved fitness and faster recovery. Too good to be true? See p125 for the answer.



Ben, deputy editor #littleandlarge

I've been brushing up on my front crawl with Britain's Strongest Man - and former teenage swimming champion - Eddie Hall, who uses the pool to work on his cardio and maintain mobility through his bowling-ball shoulders. Turn to p41 to find out more.











Men's Fil January 2016



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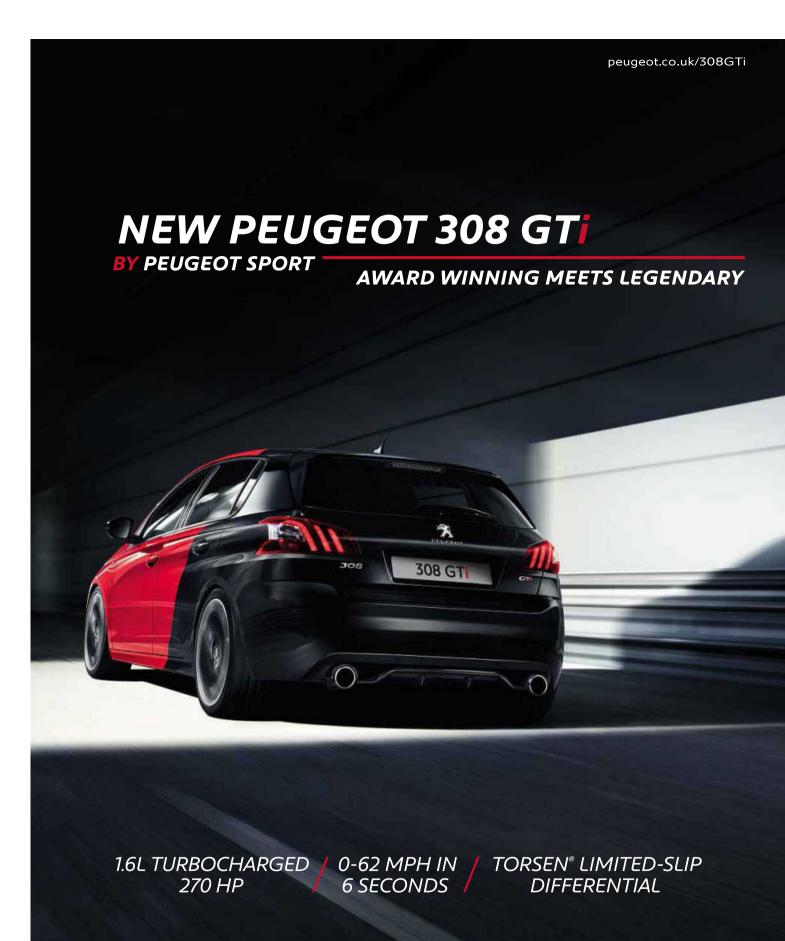
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Got a question?



MensFitnessMagazine





I walk to burn calories. Is there a pace I should pick to maximise the burn?

Keith, Devon

Varying your speed could be one way, according to a 2015 Ohio State University study into the mechanics of walking. "We found that by changing speeds incessantly there'd be a 20% increase in calorie cost,' says study coauthor Manoj Srinivasan. But there's a simpler way. "An equivalent amount of extra energy could be burned by walking faster, say at about 1.6m/s instead of the normal human speed of 1.4m/s."

Recently I've noticed that GM crops are back in the headlines - why is this?

Neil, Barry

Activists recently targeted scientists who have studied genetically modified crops, issuing freedom of information requests aiming to find links between researchers and corporations with commercial interests in GM foods, so that evidence showing them to be largely safe could be discredited. A 2015 US survey and a similar British one in 2013 showed that fewer than half of people believe GM foods are safe - but unless proof of corruption emerges, we're with the scientists, 88% of whom say they're OK.

I've read that sitting for hours at a time is bad for me. Should I schedule exercise time to offset it?

Ian, Morecambe

Prolonged sitting has been linked to higher risk of cancer, diabetes, heart disease and early death - and even exercising won't lessen the damage, according to a study at King's College London. It concluded that you should view sitting as a behaviour to change and, rather than doing extra exercise, set goals to limit the time you spend on your backside. Use a free scheduling app like Doodle to book in short walks, have meetings standing up, and go and talk to people rather than sending them an email.



I've noticed more and more companies selling insect protein. I'm sceptical - is it just a gimmick?

Sean, Fife

Far from it. In fact, it may be better than traditional meat sources in some ways. A study published in the *European Journal Of Clinical Nutrition* compared various edible insects with beef, chicken and pork and found that in general the insects offered a broader range of nutrients. The quality and levels of protein were found to be roughly similar - but farming insects uses up to 90% less land per kilo of protein, making it more sustainable. That should also mean cheaper shakes, as long as you don't mind beetle flavour.



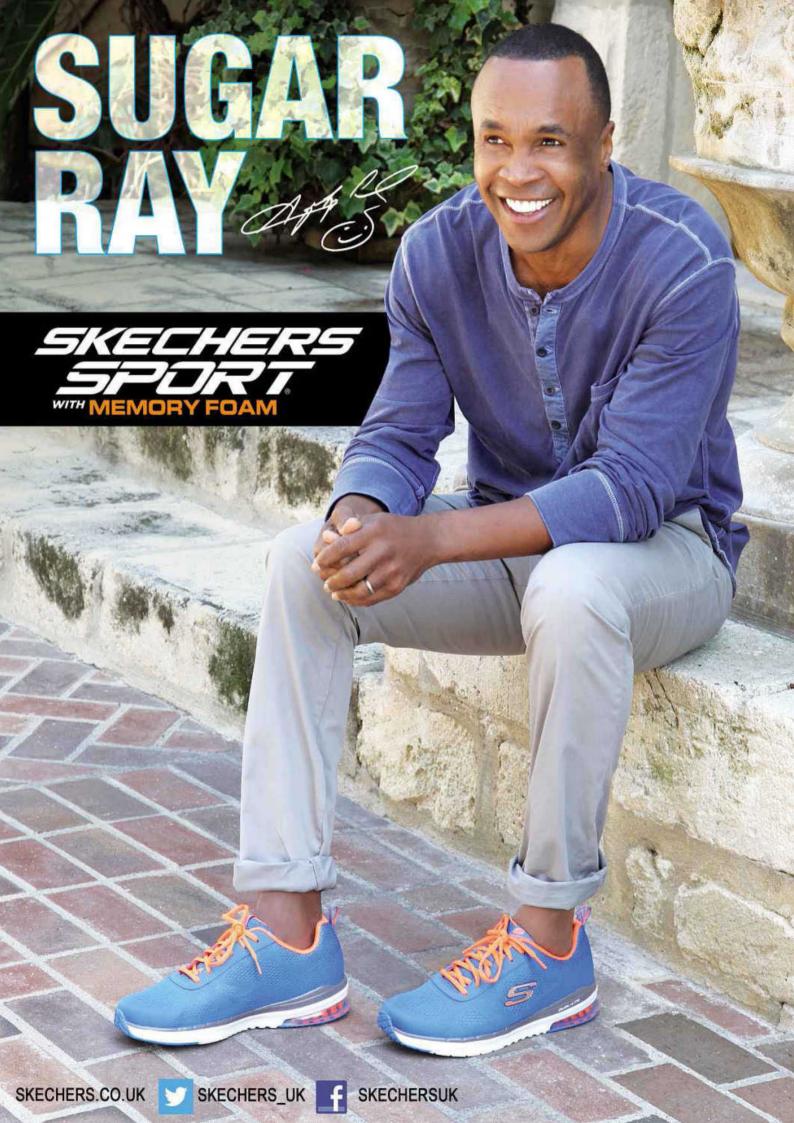


Last issue's issues

I really like the virtual reality element of Sufferfest (MF December), but what I really want is a VR headset when I ride. Is that ever going to happen?

Aaron, London

It may be closer than you think. The technology is getting cheaper: 360° cameras sell for under \$800 (around £515) in the US, while Facebook-owned Oculus Rift will start selling a headset in early 2016 that's expected to cost around £300. There are limitations - with pre-recorded video, VR training sessions can't be interactive - but as more companies invest in the technology, we'd expect those problems to be fixed.

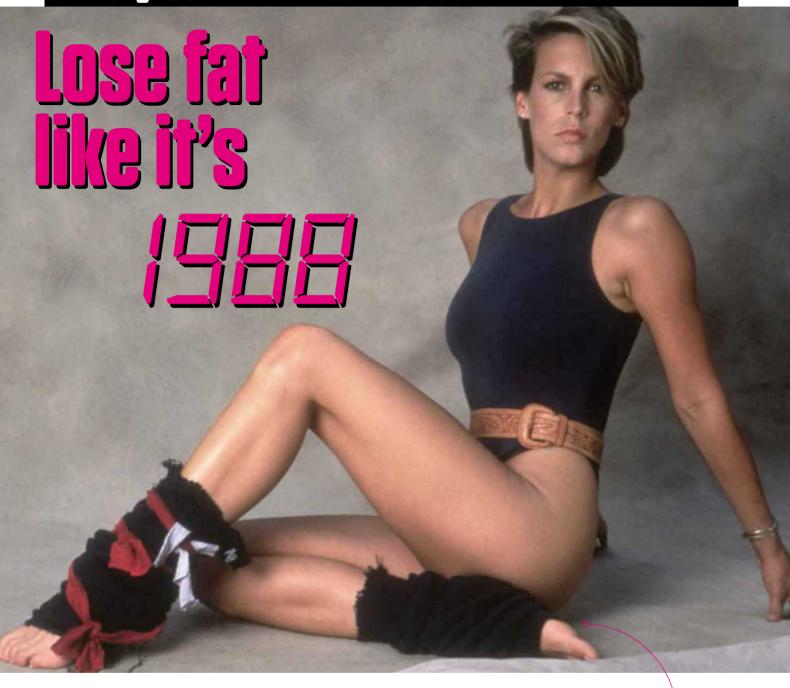




Model shown Jeep Renegade 1.6 E-torQ 110hp Longitude 5 Speed Manual at £19,695 including Special Pastel Paint at £500. OFFICIAL FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES FOR JEEP RENEGADE RANGE MPG [L/100KM]: EXTRA URBAN 47.9 [5.9] - 70.6 [4.0], URBAN 32.5 [8.7] - 55.4 [5.1], COMBINED 40.9 [6.9] - 64.2 [4.4], CO_2 EMISSIONS: 160 - 115 G/KM. Fuel consumption and CO_7 figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with £C directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption. "Customer deposit is £3,971. Optional Final Payment is £9,647. Contract Term is 24 months. Promotion available on Jeep Renegade 1.6 E-tor 0 110hp Longitude 5 Speed Manual at £19,695 including Special Pastel Paint registered by 31st December 2015. Jeep Beopo District Contract Term is 24 months. Promotion available in conjunction with Jeep Horizon PCP. With Jeep Horizon you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle end having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 10,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating dealers only. Jeep Financial Services, PO Box 4465, Slough, SL1 DRW. Jeep® is a registered trademark of FCA US LLC.

Words Max Anderton Photography The Kobal Collection

Updates what matters now



As films, TV shows and rose-tinted nostalgia would have it, the 1980s were populated by street-dancing aerobics enthusiasts who looked amazing in figurehugging spandex. Now a new study suggests there might be some truth to that last part. The evidence: people are heavier now, even if they consume the same number of calories and do the same amount of exercise as their 80s counterparts.

These findings are baffling on the surface but Tim Spector, professor of genetics at King's College London and author of The Diet Myth, has a theory about why this is happening: disappearing microbes in our gut. "Antibiotics residue in our meat, an increased dependency on processed foods, increasing exclusion diets and reduced fibre are probably making us produce less of the chemicals that keep our immune systems balanced, leading to obesity and other problems," he says. So follow a healthy, balanced diet of natural foods and it could transport you back to the 80s - which in this case is definitely a good thing.

> The Bottom Line Science says it was easier to stay lean in the 80s than now – but that's no excuse. All the more reason to put the Lycra on and train hard.

Your typical workout buddy circa 1988

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The next big thing? 3D-printed

These days we go to a shop, hop on a treadmill and have our running style analysed to figure out which shoe is the most suitable. But what if we could get shoes customcreated specifically for us?

Soon we might be able to do just that. Nike has announced a patent for a 3D shoe-printing process, while Adidas has unveiled a prototype with a 3D-printed midsole (pictured). "Creating a flexible carbon copy of the athlete's own footprint, matching exact contours and pressure points, will set the athlete up for the best running experience," is the word from Adidas.

We asked gait analysis expert Adam Rayner of Runner's Need what this will mean for runners. "At the moment we look at your running style and foot shape and then put you in a category of support, so it's not totally tailor-made," he says. "With 3D printing, shoes could be customised to individual pressure points - depending on whether they make the whole unit and midsole with the 3D printing or just an inner sole."

So will it reduce injuries? "Yes and no. Your shoe causing a problem is only one of the possibilities. A lot of injuries stem from muscular imbalances and weaknesses.'



TWITCH MORE = LIVE LONGER



Office Duracell bunnies annov us all with their constant leg tapping, but they might be on to something. New research suggests fidgeting could be the antidote to the harmful effects of prolonged sitting, a story that's been in the news frequently since Apple CEO Tim Cook called sitting "the new cancer".

"People who are more fidgety seem to have better long-term health outcomes," says Janet Cade, professor of nutritional epidemiology at the University of Leeds where they recorded the activity of almost 13,000 people for three years. One potential problem? Tapping your leg so much your desk vibrates is a surefire way to become office enemy number one but we'll swap an early grave for dagger stares any day.

DIAGNOSE YOURSELF, SAVE THE WORLD

What will bring about the end of days? Climate change? Kim Jong-un? Sentient robots? Right now, it looks more likely that we'll be wiped out as a result of antibiotics becoming ineffective through overuse, meaning minor infections could be fatal. Don't panic just do your bit to prevent the apocalypse by self-diagnosing. Sore throats are behind most winter doctors' appointments, and it's been reported that many GPs prescribe antibiotics pointlessly just to get rid of us.

"Most sore throats are due to viral infections, which are usually accompanied by a runny nose and dry cough, and they can't be treated with antibiotics - they generally resolve themselves," says MF's go-to medical expert Dr Nick Knight (@Dr NickKnight). "Adults can use the Modified Centor Criteria - four signs and symptoms - to see if they have a bacterial infection, which is when antibiotics are necessary."





A history of fever





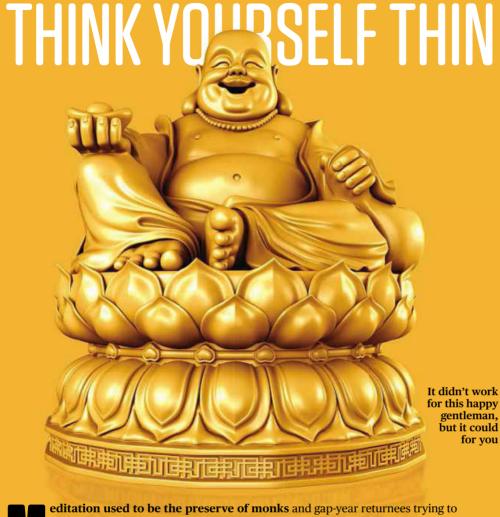
Swollen, tender neck glands (under the jawline)





BE AN ATHLETE

PREMIUM SPORTSWEAR



recreate that mind-opening trip to India, but now sporting titans including Novak Djokovic and Lionel Messi are fans. Even London mayor Boris Johnson is into mindfulness (not a bad idea considering he could stand to lose a few kilos), and a recent study found that practising this entry-level version of meditation makes people less likely to be obese. The more mindfully minded even had half a kilo less belly fat.

"It also tends to be accompanied by an increased capacity to take pressure off ourselves and be less self-critical," says Oxford Mindfulness Centre associate trainer Timothy Sweeney. "This means feeling less rushed and harassed by the unrelenting to-do list that makes up our days and weeks." The easiest way to boost mindfulness is a daily breathing exercise, and since the Brown University School of Public Health study found those with a low level of "dispositional mindfulness" - or awareness of their thoughts and feelings - were 34% more likely to be obese, it's probably time to dust off the finger bells.

15 minutes to mindfulness

According to Timothy Sweeney

1"Sit with legs crossed, torso upright and hands in your lap."

2 "Focus on the air passing through your nostrils and moving your abdominal wall.

3 "Be attentive to the sensations of 4 "Whenever your attention wanders. bring it back to focusing on each individual breath."



Myth... Busted

More e calcium = better bone

In brilliant news for brittle-boned people with a lactose intolerance, it turns out that downing milk does nothing to make your skeleton stronger. A daily intake of 1,000 to 1,200mg of calcium (roughly four glasses of fullfat milk) has long been recommended - especially for older adults - but two new studies have found little evidence to support it. "Dietary calcium is not associated with risk of fracture, and there's no clinical trial evidence that increasing intake prevents fractures," the study says.

The research that sparked the myth, published in 1992, focused on people who were both frail and deficient in vitamin D, which is vital for skeleton health. Their bones were in such a state that the minor improvement caused by calcium was significant. Need more persuasion to put the milk down? A common side effect of excess calcium is constipation.



Popeve was almost right. Spinach does make us stronger, but the muscle-bound sailor would have been better off drinking beetroot juice. Nitrates aid muscle growth, and increasing the amount of leafy greens you eat will up your levels - but the liquid purple stuff has the highest concentration.

"It's a small study, but we see robust changes in muscle power about two hours after patients drink beetroot juice," says Dr Linda R Peterson, associate professor at Washington University School of Medicine.

Down a concentrated shot (available in health stores and some supermarkets) before your next workout for enhanced strength. You won't suddenly be able to uproot trees and use them to beat down bearded bullies, but every little helps.

James Anderson

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running and cycling the length of the UK - and now the British ultra-endurance adventurer wants to help you with yours

Start like Sean

"Four years ago I had just £1 to my name, so I had to work really hard on proposals to potential sponsors, showing I had the determination to achieve what I set out to do attempting to cycle round the world," says Conway. When he managed to convince a local business owner to fund his first challenge, he says, "it gave me the ability to do what I wanted, which brought with it a new lease of life and improved confidence". He has now set up his own scholarship scheme to give others a similar opportunity.

Risk your reward

"There has to be a massive element of risk - without it, where's the human interest?" says Conway. It's vital that you choose a challenge that lives up to the name and is truly demanding. "I want there to be a massive chance you won't make it. That may sound harsh, but without the potential for failure you'll struggle to capture my imagination - and that of anyone you ask to sponsor you." There's a perverse pleasure in seeing people fail, but watching them almost fail and then succeed is a far more exciting journey to get behind.

Fear failure

Don't think of the glory of success to get you through the tough times. Imagine the crushing disappointment of quitting. "Fear of failure is a far bigger motivating factor than the potential rewards

I want there to be a massive chance you won't make it. Without the potential for failure you'll struggle to capture my

of success," says Conway. "When I swam the length of Britain not once did I think, 'I'll get a good book deal off the back of this'. Focus on your current goal, whether it's to get to the end of that day or the end of the road, and enjoy the process." The challenge then becomes about bettering rather than rewarding yourself.

ridesocial

Reach for the stars

Conway's grants will help anyone pursuing a dream who's held back by financial restraints. "I want big dreams, difficult dreams - and most of all - bonkers dreams," says Conway. He's not intending to "top up someone's Everest fund" and insists that the money will only go towards challenges that mean the

most on a personal level. "The perfect pitch would be someone with a crazy dream who simply can't afford to do it by themselves."

Updates | People

Make your story inspiring

Conway also knows how to get more people behind you. "Be genuine," he says. "Audiences are smart and if they think you're not being authentic they'll lose interest and won't follow or share your story. Find a creative way to share it. People respond better to images so if you're climbing a mountain, for example, don't just tweet how hard it is - show them." Need some inspiration? Check out seanconway.com for sponsorship application details and Conway's own adventure blogs.

imagination



Work every muscle in one move

Fire up your whole body with the blurpee - the best back-builder that doesn't require a bar

The problem with going completely kit-free has always been behind you. Without anything to pull on, it's difficult to engage the bigger muscles of the back, making for muscular imbalances and aggravating your already-probably-quiteserious nine-to-five hunch. The solution? The blurpee. Created by productivity guru Tim Ferriss, author of The 4-Hour Body, this upgrade on the traditional burpee uses wider foot-placement to force you to pull yourself forward into the jump part of the move - activating the lats (hence the "L" in the name) alongside virtually every other muscle. It isn't easy, but as Theodore Roosevelt almost certainly once said, nothing worthwhile ever is.



REPROGRAM VALUE BADAY

Your lifting form is suspect. Use everyday items to fix it



Fix squats with **tape**

When you squat heavy, your pelvis tends to tuck under – this is known as "butt-wink" and puts your spine in danger. To fix it, put a piece of tape on the intersection of your back and shorts. If it's pulled off as you descend, you need to keep your lower back flatter.



Do better kettlebell swings with **a box**

The kettlebell swing is technically a hip hinge, not a squat. If you're bending your knees too much, you're doing it wrong. Set a cardboard box at roughly shin height. If you hit it, you're squatting too much.



Crawl better with a hall

Crawls – bear, Spider-Man or other – are a fine conditioning tool, but widely misused. Put a small ball (not a full-size football – try a size 3) on your lower back while you do them. This'll force you to keep your back flat, engaging your core and safeguarding your spine.

How to do it

Stand with feet as wide apart as is comfortable. Put your hands on

the floor and jump your legs back, then drop into a strict press-up

(chest touches the floor, thighs don't). At the top of the move, use

your arms to "pull" your body towards your hands as you jump to

your feet, then jump up and land in the starting position. Repeat as

necessary/tolerable. Do as many reps as possible in five minutes.

Bridge the gap

Want to improve your grip? The climber in this picture explains how to prepare your hands for the toughest challenges

Tim Shieff had never seen the Williamsburg Bridge in person before photographer Johnny Budd

before photographer Johnny Budden showed him where he wanted him to climb for a shot. "The bridge looked so beautiful and I wanted to be a part of it," says Shieff, a perfectly reasonable explanation for why he ended up hanging precariously above New York's East River.

You'd be forgiven for thinking this kind of stunt would require days of planning. "The more you think about something the more fear can creep in. In that sense, the less planning the better," says Shieff. "I didn't see the location until five minutes before the photo was taken. I just looked around to check the coast was clear, hopped the fence and started climbing."

Shieff hasn't got a death wish. It's his experience that allows him to tackle climbs with little planning. "Climbing is methodical: it's just one hand after the other, checking every grip and three points of contact at all times. You turn off your brain and just go with the flow of it.

"I knew I could do it," says Shieff. "I trusted my body's capabilities. I just said 'go', then witnessed the journey."

How to

Shieff's tips for gravity-defying grip

1 Dead hand

"Simply hang on a bar without tension through the biceps or shoulders," says Shieff. "Your traps should sink down your back so your shoulders aren't shrugged. Three sets of 30 seconds is good for strength and also shoulder posture."

Swinging on a bar

"Swinging back and forth using your legs ensures you have weight through all parts of the hands," says Sheiff. "You're forced to grip or you'll slip off. Do three sets of seven swings to start. It's great for your forearms, abs and hip flexors."

3 Monkey swings

Head to the park and tackle the monkey bars. "It's a great grip strength, biceps and shoulder workout," says Sheiff. "It's a movement that's natural for kids but as adults we lose it. Pull your hips back between each swing for momentum."





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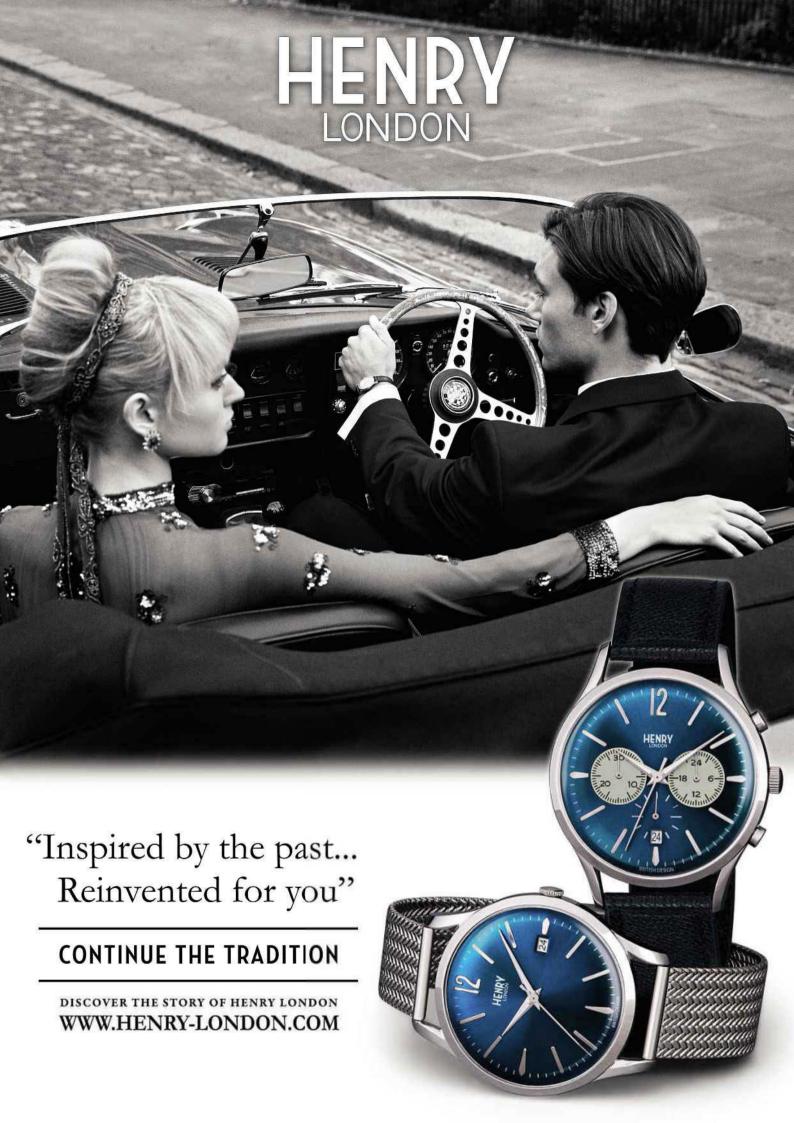
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Q: Should I train movements instead of muscles?

Name Vern Gambetta **Speciality** Strength and conditioning

Acknowledged as the father of functional training, Gambetta has worked with top-level athletes across various snorts, including track and field, American football, basketball, swimming and rugby.

hen you first go to the gym, it's tempting to focus on your chest and arms. It's what most of your fellow gym-goers will probably be doing - and everyone wants to look good in a T-shirt. But in reality, whether you want to build a stronger body, get better at sports or just prepare yourself for dayto-day life, it pays to base your sessions on how your body works as a whole rather than targeting its specific parts.

Weightlifting involves training your body to be better co-ordinated when dealing with added resistance and

teaching your muscles to link up and work through different movement patterns more powerfully and efficiently. If you focus on and isolate specific muscles, you reduce the amount of fullbody co-ordination required, and with it the relevance to real-life situations.

Compare training your legs using machine leg extensions and barbell squats. The squat requires your hip, knee and ankle to work together, while the leg extension isolates the quad and trains it out of context. Guess which is more useful when you're climbing a step?

Instead of splitting your workouts into body parts, I suggest making them all full-body sessions, and ensuring that each contains exercises that work through the five main movement patterns: pushing, pulling, squatting, bracing and rotating (see the moves below). You don't need to train each pattern exhaustively, either. I recommend a maximum of two exercises per movement in each workout, performed back to back as a superset (any more increases the risk of injury, which is another reason to avoid spending a whole workout targeting one area).

Move to improve

An example would be to twin dumbbell high pulls with kettlebell swings for your pulling exercises, barbell squats and dumbbell lunges for your squatting exercises or alternating dumbbell bench presses and press-ups for your pushing exercises. To further refine your workout, do any total-body exercises - for example, deadlifts for pulling or push press for pushing - at the start of the workout, and save exercises that are specific to the upper or lower body for the end.

By improving your body's ability to link up, co-ordinate and produce force through all of these movement patterns, you'll bulletproof yourself for any activity and build muscle. gambetta.com

The Bottom Line Train movement patterns rather than specific muscle groups and you'll build muscle, improve performance, reduce injury and look as good as you feel.



Make your moves

Illustrations Sudden Impact Photography Getty

Target each of the main movement patterns with Gambetta's pick of the hest exercises



Push

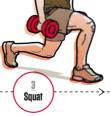
PRESS-UP

Keep your core and glutes tensed to ensure you're working your whole body



DUMBBELL HIGH PULL (left)

Think about spreading your elbows wide apart and pulling the dumbbells back rather than high up.



ALTERNATING

DUMBBELL LUNGE (above) Keep your chest up throughout, and push off your front leg to return to the start position.



kettlebell touching the ground as you twist from side to side.



PLANK

Keep your body tense and straight, and avoid the temptation to let your hips sag





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Updates | Experts



Name Roz McGinty **Speciality** Triathlon

A European gold medallist and Team GB competitor in her Ironman age group. McGinty also devotes time to helping those who can't otherwise compete – and says it helps her training as well



Q: Can helping other people make me a better runner?

s an athlete, not being able to work out because of an injury is soul-destroying. But it's really important to be aware that some people are permanently unable to train. I'm always keen to give something back to my sport - I try to do some marshalling every year - but guide running, when you lead someone who's partially sighted or blind around a course to give them a chance to experience what many people take for granted, has been the most satisfying thing I've done.

When British Triathlon asked me to be a guide runner I did have some reservations. I work full-time as well as training hard, and the last thing I wanted to do was promise something I couldn't deliver. But Alison Mead, the woman I was to assist who'd lost her sight following a brain haemorrhage and four strokes, was quite well set up at home with a treadmill and exercise bike. It wasn't as if she needed help several times a week, just every now and then, so we arranged to do a few sessions.

I realised I could help make a difference without it affecting my work or my own training. Without help, people like Alison simply can't take part in races.

Find some direction

Being a guide isn't as simple as running alongside someone and telling them which way to go. For a start, triathlon obviously has three disciplines.

Running is the simplest - there's just a small handle you hold between you. Swimming is trickier: Alison would swim keeping one hand against the side of the pool and the other brushing against me. The bike section requires the guide to ride behind the competitor on a tandem, and communication is absolutely vital - I have to be very clear about everything from corners to hills.

A guide runner always needs to be quicker than the person they're guiding, so it's not something that enables you to push yourself and set new PBs. The main benefit is psychological. Alison was grinning from ear to ear the moment she got outside - she gets such a buzz from it, and that transfers over to me. That's the main thing I get out of it feeling happy to be training being able to race.

Because of that, I've started to enjoy doing different distances. Alison and I are now doing 5K events, a distance that I've always hated you've got to run really fast and hard, which I never enjoyed. But now I've started to really like it and that's purely because guiding has turned it into a positive experience for me.

The Bottom Line Guide running might not get you faster or fitter but it's well worth doing for the gratifying feeling it produces. If you're stuck in a rut, it'll make you feel happy about training again.

Got a lot out of sport? Here's how you can give something back

Register to be a guide at

britishblindsport.org.uk. "Be honest about your ability - the last thing either of you need is for you to be dragged along," McGinty says. "There are people of all different abilities so there's always someone you'll be able to help."

UK non-profit Parkrun organises 5Ks around the country (and beyond) for anvone who wants to run. You can donate, volunteer or even set up your own - see parkrun.org.uk.

Sign up to the Big Help Out and find ways to help local clubs, BHO's research calculated a volunteer in sport creates a "wellbeing value" worth over £16,000, for themselves and those they help. Visit joininuk.org.

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Name Dr Martha Clare Morris **Speciality** Nutrition and nreventive medicine

As lead author of the study on the MIND diet at Rush University Medical Centre in Chicago, Morris says eating right when you're young can protect your cognitive nowers in the long term

Q: Can my diet save me from dementia?

t's easy to think of cognitive problems such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease as issues you won't have to worry about for decades. If only that were true. In reality, there's evidence that deterioration of the neurons in your brain accumulates over the course of your life - just like wear and tear on your joints. But you can take steps to reduce the damage to your joints and now, thanks to new research, you can significantly lower the risk of cognitive decline by cleaning up your diet.

The answer lies in the MIND diet, in which MIND stands for Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay. It's a hybrid of two healthy diets: the healthy fats-rich Mediterranean diet and one developed to tackle high blood pressure called DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension). Both have shown signs they help slow mental decline, and MIND increases the effect.

The MIND diet isn't a set of hard and fast rules. Instead there's a list of ten brain-boosting food groups you should add to your shopping list and five foods you should limit - we don't say "never eat". On the menu are leafy greens, other veg, nuts, berries, beans, wholegrains, fish, poultry, olive oil and wine (in moderation). Not recommended are red meat, butter and margarine, cheese, pastries and sweets, and fried food. In the study, sticking closely to these guidelines showed a 53% reduction in risk of cognitive decline. Following the rules half the time still provided a 35% improvement.

Put vour guard up

The defining characteristic of Alzheimer's disease is an accumulation of a protein called amyloid beta plaque, which disrupts the communication between neurons and leads to inflammation, eventually causing a decrease in brain volume. Nutrients in your food can accelerate or prevent this inflammation.

"Omega 3 fatty acids from fish are important for healthy functioning of neurons"

The MIND diet promotes foods that will help including polyphenols found in berries, lutein in leafy veg and folate in wholegrains. Omega 3 fatty acids from fish are important for healthy functioning of neurons and synaptic functions.

The ratio of saturated to unsaturated fats in your diet is also key. You want a higher ratio of unsaturated fat like polyunsaturated and monounsaturated (from olive oil and nuts) to saturated fat (meat and dairy). As well as inflammation, a diet higher in saturated fats disrupts the blood-brain barrier, which keeps harmful substances out of the brain and ushers in important nutrients to support brain function.

Alzheimer's is a terrible disease. Out of all of the major diseases it's ranked fifth among the leading causes of death in the US [and second in the UK] - and it's the only one we don't have any treatment or cure for. So if a simple adjustment of your diet could reduce the risk of getting it, it's crazy not to. The longer you practise good dietary behaviour, the better your health will be throughout your life. Isn't that a weight off your mind?

The Bottom Line Eating plenty of good fats, leafy veg, berries, wholegrains and a bit of seafood and poultry, while limiting your intake of red meat, butter, cheese and fried food will reduce your risk of cognitive decline by 53%.



Piece of MIND

It's not about counting calories or overdosing on leafy veg. Here are some satisfyingly hearty MIND-friendly meals



BREAKFAST

Blueberry and strawberry smoothie with wholegrain oats and water

Wholegrain toast with

almond butter spread



Chicken, pepper and onion fajitas with wholegrain wraps

Wholegrain spaghetti with prawns and broccoli in spicy tomato sauce



SNACK

Mixed brazil, cashew, almonds and macadamia nuts

Carrots and peppers with hummus



Salmon with a spinach and lentil salad and nlive nil dressing and a glass of white wine

Turkey casserole with squash, kale, beans and soy beans and a glass of red wine



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As an enthusiastic carnivore, MF's associate editor Joel Snape was suspicious of the recent hysterical headlines claiming bacon and sausages would give us cancer. He examines the facts hebind the nutlandish claims



Q: Should I stop eating bacon?

n October the World Health Organisation released a report concluding that eating processed meat - including bacon, ham and hot dogs - increases your risk of cancer, and that eating other red meat "probably" increases the risk as well. But, as the *Daily Mail* has spent the past decade establishing, almost everything affects your risk of cancer one way or the other. So the real question is, how much does it increase the risk? And the answer is... not much.

A lot's been made of the fact that processed meat is now included in the WHO's Category 1 list of carcinogens, right next to smoking, plutonium and diesel exhaust fumes. (Category 1 also includes alcohol and sunlight, which is something to consider next time you're in a beer garden.) But the WHO is careful to point out that this doesn't mean they're all equally dangerous.

"The International Agency for Research on Cancer classifications describe the strength of the scientific evidence about an agent being a cause of cancer, rather than assessing the level of risk," said a statement accompanying the research.

So what's the level of risk? Well, you might have read that processed meat increases your risk of colorectal cancer "by 18%" but that only matters if you know what your risk was in the first place. So here's the simple version: as a normal human adult man, the chance of getting colorectal cancer (the one the study's talking about) is about five in 1,000. That 18% increases the five in 1,000 to almost

six in 1,000, or, as non-scientists might describe it, "Not really enough to worry about".

Also, bear in mind that those were observational findings (in other words, based on asking people what they ate, so possibly not that accurate) and based on someone eating 50g of processed meat (basically, a bacon sandwich) every single day.

Meaty questions

What does this mean for you? If you're the government, this is worth considering, because over your entire population it's probably going to mean more cases of cancer. If you're a man who normally stays quite healthy but occasionally fancies a filthy takeaway hot dog, it probably shouldn't make you change your habits.

Should you eat bacon every day? Possibly not - it's relatively high in calories, which might work out badly for you for other reasons. But the real advice for a healthy life is the same as it's always been: eat as much veg as you can stand, drink more water and sleep more (the WHO classes sleep-disrupting shift work as Category 2, indicating that it's "probably" carcinogenic). So have a lie-in this weekend, and don't worry too much about your breakfast.

The Bottom Line Eating bacon once or twice a week is nothing to worry about – but up your veg intake and sleep more, just to redress the balance.

2,500%

How much smoking increases your risk of lung cancer over your lifetime

18%

How much eating 50g of processed red meat a day increases your risk of colorectal cancer

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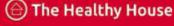
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Q: Is social media over-sexualising fitness?

Hard bodies and barely-there yoga pants are colonising our Instagram feeds. Are they inspiring or just inappropriate?



The Author

Marilyn McKenna lost over 50kg, wrote a book about her experience and now helps others get fit (marilynmckenna.com)

'd say yes - fitness has been sexualised or even pornified. Having said that, there's no escaping our evolutionary truth: we are visual creatures. There's also no point in denying that the human form is beautiful. The problem is that when we idealise only one body type, we diminish the innumerable other body types that make up the rainbow of human forms. It's great to be inspired to exercise more, but the images posted by some popular fitness accounts are at best intimidating and at worst totally unattainable for most of us.

We have to ask ourselves, can't someone be badass without being a hot piece of ass? I say they can. All bodies are beautiful - thin, muscular, taut or flabby. Badass is a state of mind, not a body fat percentage. Anyone hoping to inspire people of all body types to pursue fitness would do well to remember that.



The Instagram star

Emily Skye runs her own training programme (emilyskyefit.com), has a massive Instagram following (@emilyskyefit) and the world's most popular Facebook fitness profile

dding #fitness to a social media post doesn't necessarily mean it has anything to do with fitness, or at least what fitness means to me. I'm all for being confident and showing off your hard work - particularly if it inspires other people - but a lot of social media posts that claim to be about "fitspiration" are nothing more than softcore pornography.

I meet amazing people who work hard, achieve their goals and put out positive messages, so it disappoints me to see smart, beautiful people taking their clothes off to get more followers and claiming it's about being healthy. Associations like that give fitness a bad name and send a dangerous message to young people desperate for acceptance.

If posting that type of imagery makes you happy, that's cool but if you ask me it's nothing to do with fitness.



Idealising fit bodies has been with us since the Ancient Greeks first chiselled rock-hard abs into marble and - in a clear breach of Instagram rules - opted for statues sans trousers. Now, though, we're wiser about body image and sexual objectification - and about now to deal with these issues: discuss them openly and regularly.



The Journalist

Andrew Bisharat runs climbing website eveningsends.com, is editor at large for Rock And Ice magazine and writes for **National Geographic**

e live in what I call the Age of the Athlete Model. They create compelling visual stories because they look so damn good doing whatever they're doing. They're idols - walking avatars for happy lifestyles.

Take Sierra Blair-Coyle, for example - she's a rock climber and I follow her on Instagram, along with around 70,400 others, and I'm also one of 294,000 people who Like her athlete page on Facebook. I can't say why anyone else follows her, but my reason has always been simple: she's totally hot. In photos she's usually smiling, wearing a cute outfit and often doing something that vaguely resembles real rock climbing.

Being a professional athlete used be about athleticism, not recognition or fame, but now it's the other way around: athletic recognition is the by-product of popularity and popularity is the result of attractiveness. I suppose it's a little sad, but it's true, and it's not only fitness that's affected.



The Wellness Guru

Tosca Reno is founder of the Eat-Clean diet, a fitness model and a certified nutritional therapy practitioner (toscareno.com)

here's definitely a growing number of people who conflate fitness with sex, and social media is one the main reasons. People need to think about how they're presenting themselves to a potentially huge audience and how young people will approach exercise if that kind of thing becomes normal. By associating sexualised imagery with fitness we're saying it's acceptable to post those kinds of pictures online, but those sorts of images say nothing positive about us as people. They don't even show how fit we really are.

It's not just women who are trying to emulate these over-sexualised and often unrealistic body images either we're seeing all sorts of eating disorders and cases of body dysmorphia among young men too. Wellness should be our greatest concern and the reason why we get into fitness. The way we look should be entirely secondary. Wellness is about incorporating every aspect of body, mind, soul and nutrition. That should be the real struggle, not looking for followers and "likes" in a G-string.

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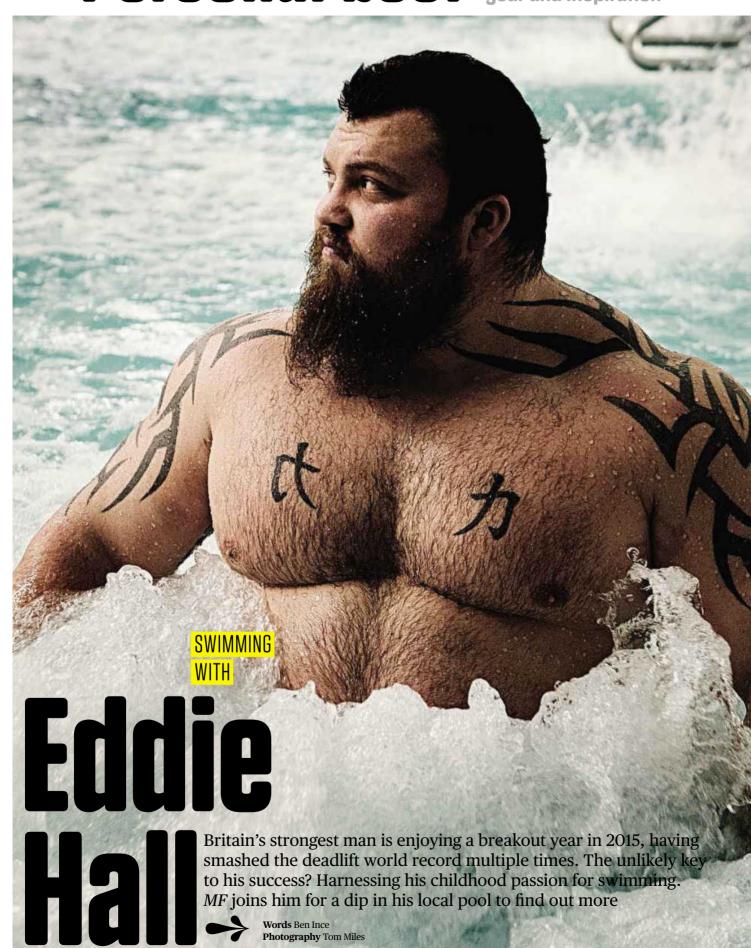
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ddie Hall can swim. Strongest Man competition - but the

Yes, he's enormous even bigger close up than he looks when hoisting tractor tyres aloft in the World's

real shock comes when you see him glide effortlessly down the pool like a sort of cylindrical shark, leaving us lagging limply behind in his (not insignificant) wake. But why is the Stoke-on-Trent native spending his Monday mornings swimming lengths when he could be lifting weights?

That was pretty damn quick. You've done this before, right? Most people don't know it, but I was actually a national champion swimmer as a kid.

Seriously? How did that come about?

My mum's a swimming teacher, so I was literally thrown in the pool when I was two years old and left to sink or swim. I joined a local club when I was five, and by the time I was ten I was training 14 hours a week in the water and doing extra physio and gym sessions. I had my own coach and nutritionist and I was on a path to being an Olympic athlete.

That sounds like a pretty serious commitment for a ten-vear-old.

It really was. I was treated like a professional athlete - I wasn't allowed to muck about or lay off the diet, and it was very strict. I won the nationals for the third year in a row when I was 13, and then in my mid-teens I suddenly realised it'd become a job. I didn't have any kind of social life - my mates were off shagging girls and drinking, and I was stuck in a swimming pool. It was one of those defining moments in your life when you think, "Can I be arsed or can't I?" In the end I just didn't want to do it any more, so I quit.

Did you regret that afterwards?

Yeah, it was actually really tough dealing with it. I'd been at the top of my game as a swimmer for so many years, and then suddenly I had to try and blend into an average lifestyle of going out, drinking, smoking drugs, all the things you do as a teenager. I actually got really depressed and ended up getting kicked out of school - which I'm not proud of. But then I started going to the gym and working out, and I've never looked back.

We push off for another pair of 25m lengths. Eddie waits patiently for us to catch up.

How fast was that?

Around 45 seconds. I can still swim 50m in 29 seconds at a push, which is only six seconds off the qualifying time for the Olympics. But for training purposes I do it in 40-50 seconds and repeat that every two minutes.

Like an interval session?

Exactly. Strongman events require 60-second bursts of energy, so all my training is geared towards replicating that. Swimming is great for shoulder mobility, and my heart rate never drops below 150-160bpm, so it gives me a good cardio workout too.

You must get funny looks in the pool... Yeah for sure, it's not every day you see a 28-stone [178kg] bloke swimming in the fast lane.

It's not every day you see a 28-stone bloke, full stop. Have you always been this big?

It's a running joke in my family that I've always weighed my age, so at five years old I was five stone, at ten years old I was ten stone, at 15 I was 15 and so on. I've kept adding a stone a year during my strongman career, and now I'm 27 and a half years old and I'm pretty much hitting 28 stone exactly.

That's insane. How much do you have to eat to maintain that size?

On a good day I eat 10,000-plus calories. On a bad day - if I'm travelling, doing a seminar or an appearance - I'll get through roughly 6,000-7,000 calories.

You realise for most people the lowcalorie days are the good ones, right? What does 10,000 look like?

Today, for example, I woke up and drank a litre of smoothie, then had a full English breakfast, followed by a quick fish and chips pub lunch on my way to the pool because I didn't have time to cook. After we're done here I'll pick my daughter up

He doesn't look like a typical swimmer the beard alone must add its share of drag - but Hall can pull a 50m swim in almost Olympic-qualifying time, and he easily left MF splashing in the shallow end



"I was literally thrown in the pool when I was two years old and left to sink or swim"



HALL'S CV HIGHLIGHTS

Rorn in Stoke-on-Trent

Wins first national swimming title

Nuits swimming









from school and go to McDonald's. Then after my wife gets home from work I'll have a second tea, like a curry or a spag bol, and then I'll just keep snacking and grazing throughout the evening.

That sounds exhausting. It is!

Isn't it pretty pricy as well?

Me and the missus worked it out once and it's easily £250 a week, just for me. It's basically the cost of a decent mortgage every month, just on my food bill. I'm not a millionaire or anything, but it's the only way I'll ever be big enough to progress in my sport, so it's money well spent.

Why do strongmen need to be so heavy?

Weight moves weight. If you've got to pick up a 200kg barbell, it'll be a lot fucking harder if you weigh 100kg than if you're 200kg yourself. You need to have that bulk to counterbalance the huge amounts you're lifting. So in this sport, the heavier you are the better, provided it doesn't compromise your mobility. I reckon I could get up to 30 stone and still be fit and mobile.

We pause while Eddie takes a giant slurp of protein shake.

Speaking of picking up enormous weights, there's a great video on YouTube of Arnold Schwarzenegger cheering you on as you break the deadlift world record. How did that make you feel?

It was pretty cool and definitely one of those defining moments in your career. He's someone I looked up to as a kid - I'd say 99% of the people who lift weights got into it because they saw Arnie on TV and wanted to look like him.

He tried to high-five you, but you weren't having it...

That wasn't deliberate - I didn't even realise he was there until after I'd done my celebration. He was a really sound guy though.



Starts lifting weights

Enters first strongman competition

Wins UK's Strongest Man competition for the first time (he has won every year since)

Qualifies for World's Strongest Man finals for the first time

Wins Britain's Strongest Man competition for the first time (he has won 2015's too)

Sets a new deadlift world record of 436kg



You broke the record again a month later by a single kilogram, raising it to 436kg. How high could you go?

I want to lift 500kg at some point in my career. But every time I break the record I get paid, and regardless of whether it's by 1kg, 10kg or 50kg, it's always the same amount of money, so I've got to be clever about it. People might say I should set the record as high as possible now just for the love of the sport, but I've got to make a living. If some huge company want to put their name to it and put big money down - like a million quid - I'd happily pull 500kg right now, but there'd have to be a lot in it for me.

How close to that number have you got behind closed doors?

I've pulled 480kg comfortably at the gym, without a weight belt or suit, so I'm fairly confident I could do it with a suit on and a big crowd behind me.

After another pair of two-minute 50m intervals - and with MF's heart rate way higher than 160bpm - we ask to take a quick breather. Eddie agrees and proceeds to knock back a litre of buttermilk like it's a shot of espresso.

How can you train like this on a full stomach without throwing up?

My gym sessions can last up to three hours, so I need to eat to the point where I feel sick beforehand or I won't have enough fuel to get through the workout. After a while you just get used to it. To be honest, it's the least of the problems you have as a strongman.

What are the worst?

The training is so tough, even putting a pair of socks on can be difficult some days because you're that sore and stiff from training your legs the day before. Carrying so much weight is hard on your joints as well - that's why it's nice to come to the pool and float around for an hour to take the pressure off them. If I go out shopping with the missus or go for a walk into town, after a mile and a half my hips will be really sore. There's basically

"I'm not gonna keep pushing myself until I die. My plan is to dominate the sport, then walk away from it"

always something hurting, and you just have to accept the fact that you'll be in constant pain. It becomes a lifestyle.

That can't be healthy in the long term.

Of course not. I can't keep eating and training like this forever. Regardless of how much exercise you do or how good your fitness is, it just isn't healthy to be walking around at 28 stone.

On that note, former World's Strongest Man competitor Mike Jenkins died last year at the tragically early age of 31. Given the risks and hardship involved, why do you do it? Every sport has risks involved when you're competing at the highest level and pushing your body to the absolute limit. You see it with swimmers, marathon runners, rugby players - even football's had players collapse dead on the pitch in recent years. Don't get me wrong, I'm not gonna keep pushing myself until I fucking die. My plan is to win World's Strongest Man, dominate the sport, then walk away from it, like I did with swimming. I want to give back to my family and enjoy my life with them, but first I've got to achieve what I set out to do, which is to become the best in the world.

Eddie Hall is an ambassador for Protein Dynamix. Thanks to M-Club Spa and Fitness in Stoke

MF MagBooks

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Photography Steve Neaves **Styling** Hayley Lawrence **Grooming** Laura Tucker Model Kevin Dixon@MOT



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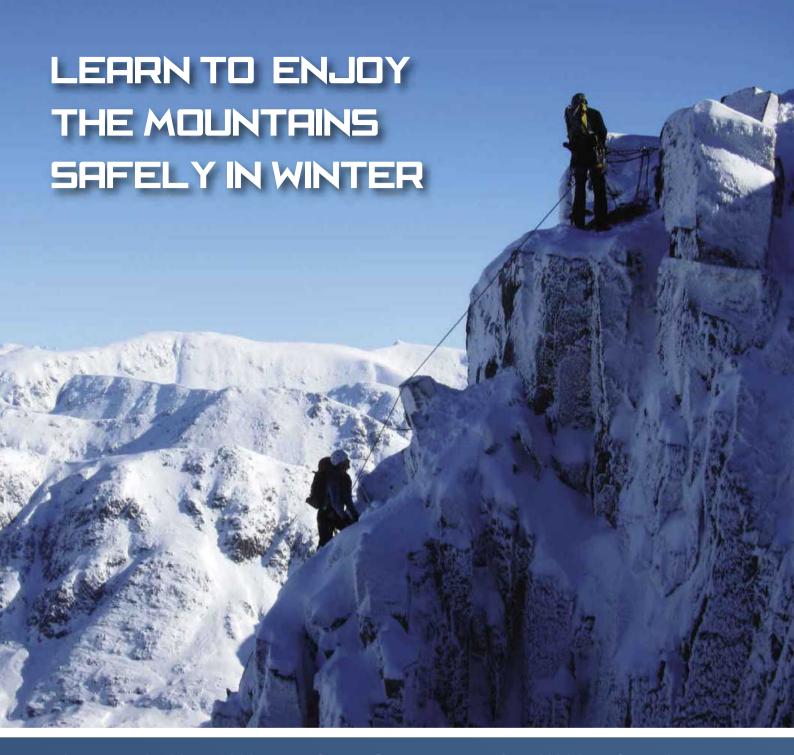












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Can a box make me a better chef?

They promise quality ingredients and simple recipes for top-notch meals. We skip the supermarket to find out if three leading food box delivery services can bring haute cuisine home







THE PANEL

Updates editor Max Anderton and his girlfriend Lucy put their culinary skills to the test, while dietitian Jo Travers casts an expert eve over the nutritional content.

| food box delivery services car | d box delivery services can bring haute cuisine home | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | Minoful Chef MindfulChef.com From £42* (flexible subscription) | HelloFresh.co.uk From £36* (flexible subscription) | Goosto.co.uk From £35* (no subscription) | |
| The meal | Mediterranean cod with millet tabbouleh | Steak tagliata with rosemary roast potatoes and peppercorn sauce | Chicken pesto with bulgur wheat | |
| Ingredient quality | "A humungous chunk of cod so fresh I wouldn't be surprised if it was swimming around this morning," says Lucy. | "Beef that makes the supermarket stuff look positively anaemic," says Lucy. | "A couple of the basil leaves have wilted slightly, but that's me looking for something to moan about," says Max. | |
| Difficulty | "Super-simple. I've never cooked millet before, but the whole process was a doddle," says Lucy. | "The easiest recipe to follow," says Max. " <mark>Plus, we learned how to make peppercorn sauce</mark> . Bonus." | "The recipe card is pretty wordy, but step-by-step pictures help minimise any panic moments," says Lucy. | |
| Flavour | "So good – <mark>like something I'd have on holiday</mark> and intend to cook back at home, but never get round to," says Max. | "It's meat and potatoes, true, but that makes it sound boring as hell," says Lucy. "This is restaurant quality," | "Delicious," says Max. "Comfort food without the guilt." | |
| Dietitian's take | "A decent mix of lean protein, carbs and veg. The almonds also provide good fats and are linked with improving cholesterol levels." | "Steak is a great source of protein, but this one could do with more veg to increase the minerals and vitamins." | "The healthiest of the bunch. Low-Gl bulgur wheat keeps you full for longer and chicken breast is a super-lean protein source." | |
| | แบทเกิดเกาส์ กากเองเอเกา เองอเจ. | | ιδ α δυμσι-ισαιι μι υισιιι δυμι ου. | |

The recipe cards are so simple to

follow and the meals so refined

you'll be surprised you're the

one who's cooked them.

Top quality, even though it didn't

require much culinary talent. Also,

the meals never include pasta, white

rice or bread – perfect for fat loss.

MF verdict

The easiest to cook – and all the meals

(we also had double chipotle burgers

and crispy fish goujons) are a perfect blend of indulgence and healthiness.



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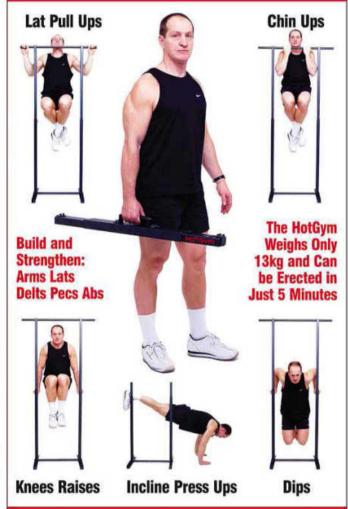
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Words to live by The most inspiring true stories of our time, as picked by team MF

Open: An Autobiography

by Andre Agassi

How do you get to be the first golden slam (four Opens plus the Olympics) winner in history? Hard work - for decades. From his beginnings hitting a thousand balls a day in his family's back yard to his brutal reinvention via lifting heavy iron, Agassi's painfully honest memoir will make you think twice before you begrudge any tennis superstar their next million-dollar endorsement. *Joel Snape, associate editor*

Mother. Wife. Sister. Human. Warrior. Falcon. Yardstick. Turban. Cabbage.

by Rob Delaney

The star of sitcom Catastrophe is now a successful comedian and writer often called "the funniest person on Twitter" but, as his memoir illustrates, 15 years ago he was a self-destructive alcoholic who looked more likely to be dead by 25. He demonstrates - hilariously - that no matter how miserable a path your life is on, you can turn it around. Chris Miller, managing editor

My Fight/Your Fight

by Ronda Rousey

Rousey's autobiography could easily have followed the well-worn ground of a rags-to-riches story. Instead, the book focuses squarely on her training as a martial artist, highlighting just how hard she's had to grind to succeed. During one judo match her elbow is dislocated as the result of an illegal move; rather than complain she uses her damaged arm to throw her opponent and win. Fierce. Matt Huckle, features writer

Total Recall: My Unbelievably True Life Story

by Arnold Schwarzenegger

One of the most inspirational men in history. From humble beginnings in rural postwar Austria, Arnie proceeds to conquer the worlds of bodybuilding, Hollywood and even American politics, all thanks to his relentless work ethic and unshakeable self-belief. His top tip for getting what you want from life? "There are no shortcuts everything is reps, reps, reps.' Ben Ince, deputy editor

Hitman: My Real Life In The World Of Cartoon Wrestling

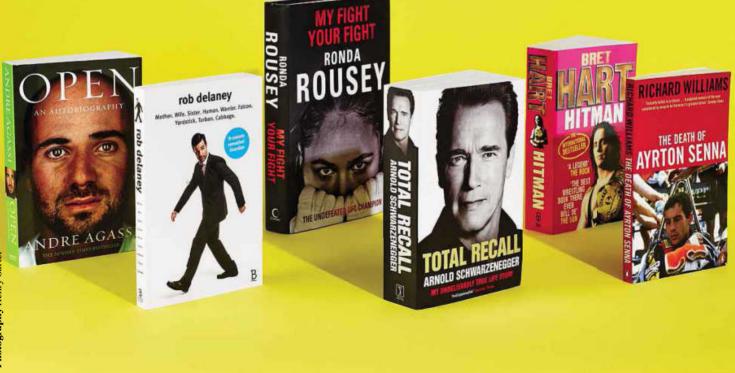
by Bret Hart

Wrestling is just meatheads play-fighting, right? Kind of, but the story of Canada's biggest WWE superstar reveals a world of back-stabbing where fictional rivalries blur into real life. In this handbook for dealing with horrible bosses, "The Hitman" stands up for what he believes in, doesn't give in to intimidation and (most of the time) gets what he wants. Max Anderton, head of digital content

The Death Of Ayrton Senna

by Richard Williams

Don't expect a morbid obituary, despite the title - this is an intimate deconstruction of the mercurial, uncompromising Brazilian F1 driver before his fatal crash in 1994 at the San Marino Grand Prix. Elegantly written by longstanding racing journalist Williams, it reveals the relentless dedication and white-hot desire that burns within exceptional sportsmen. Sam Rider, fitness editor



Instant grooming fixes for the morning after the night before

Protect

Mitchum Advanced (£2, boots.com) is one of the few antiperspirants that actually works all day long, though we wouldn't put its 48-hour claim to a severe test. One potential problem? Last night might take longer to sweat out.

Moisturise

Lack of sleep messes with your body's ability to regulate skin moisture. Give it the whole day off and use Bulldog Intensive 24hr Moisturiser (£10, boots.com). Made entirely from natural ingredients, it'll leave your face's pH levels as it found them.

Cleanse

Bacteria in your mouth cause bad breath and brushing teeth won't kill all of them. Mouthwash does better and while it often has a nasty medicinal flavour, Hello Supermint (£6, boots.com) tastes almost good enough to swallow.

Style

Not doing your hair as you usually do is a sure giveaway that you might be suffering. Use product with a matt finish such as Daimon Barber Clay Pomade (£17, thedaimonbarber.com) to avoid a greasy, dishevelled look.



(AND BUILT THIS BODY)

This 25-year-old trainer is one of the most inspiring men we've met in years. Here's why

Words Joel Snape Photography Steve Neaves Styling Hayley Lawrence Grooming Laura Tucker



ang out with Ben Mudge for half an hour, or see him with his shirt off, and you'd never think he's anything other than a pretty normal 25-year-old personal trainer from Belfast with an infectious sense of enthusiasm and an enviable set of abs. That's the way he likes it.

"I don't ever want someone to pick me out of the crowd as the sick one," he says, between swapping chest-building tips with *MF* on our cover shoot (it turns out we aren't retracting our shoulders enough before we bench). "I'd want to be their last pick. I try to live my life like a normal guy, but that's what helps me on the days I'm not feeling so motivated."

For Mudge, though, there's more to staying in shape than just looking good on Instagram. Because he has the inherited condition cystic fibrosis, training hard and eating right helps him fight off potentially fatal infections, as well as keeping his organs and digestive system working properly. "It just slows everything down, makes everything harder," he explains. "It affects the production of mucus in the body - for most people it's like water, but for me it's more like wallpaper paste. It also affects the pancreas, so digestion doesn't really happen unless I take digestive enzymes. The mutation I have affects about 50% of people with cystic fibrosis, so... it's kind of selfish, but I'm glad I've got the most common version because it means treatments are targeted to it."

The condition meant an operation when Mudge was less than three days old - "You can still see the scar on my stomach, and I've got one on my throat that I only saw the other day, when I was taking off my tan from a bodybuilding

show" - and worrying days when he lost weight because his stomach wasn't digesting foods properly. Despite that, though, and another scare when he was seven (which he says was "nearly fatal, but I don't remember anything except eating jelly babies because they were the only thing I could face") he managed to live fairly normally until he was 18.

"My mum and dad's approach was that I shouldn't be excluded from anything," says Mudge. "That's why it's strange to me now when people say I'm inspirational. I don't wake up and do anything different from what I feel is normal."

At 18, though, disaster (almost) struck. "I left school and that took away organised sports," explains Mudge. "That was when I got really sick. A chest infection landed me in the hospital for two weeks on an IV. For me, that was weird, because there are days I forget I have cystic fibrosis, and again I'm very grateful for that. But it really drove home that there are certain things other people can do that I can't."

He did some thinking and realised there was something missing. "I'd always played rugby three times a week and trained in American football and other organised sports. I had a weight set in my garage, but I never really used it. So I decided I needed to do something. I was training in my garage, and one of my big brother's friends came along, and he pushed the entire stack - that's one of the first things that I remember that gave me a goal, something to drive towards."

And, yes, he pushed the stack eventually - but he also started training almost every day, taking control of his own diet, eating lean proteins and good fats rather than the junk food doctors recommended (really), and learning more about training. "Eventually I started lifting in my university gym and became one of those guys who just trains chest and arms all the time," he grins. "I kidded myself that I didn't need to train legs because, you know, I used to run a lot." (An aside here: Mudge most definitely trains legs now, to the extent that he nearly had to cancel a recent modelling shoot because his quads are so gigantic it made the trousers look strange.)

And then came *Game Of Thrones*.

Everyone's favourite swords-and-sex-and-sorcery show does a fair amount of filming in Belfast, and at 20 Mudge landed a job on the show as a trainee assistant director.

"There were a lot of 17-hour days. I was always first on set and last off, looking after the cast and extras, telling them when to be on set and occasionally doing stand-in work. But a lot of the food they were giving us was crap, just fuel to keep us going, nothing nutritious. There was a lot of fat, which my pancreas doesn't really know what to do with. With that, and being outside all the time, I got sick again."

He was in and out of hospital for more than a month. "Again, I know that many people have it a lot worse than me, but it was bad... I couldn't run up a couple of flights of stairs without having to stop because I was out of breath. I realised I couldn't do the job, so I had to think, OK, what do I enjoy? And I enjoyed going to the gym with my friends. And I always wanted to be stronger, wanted to be faster. I was always the guy reading up on how to train better. At some point, one of the guys in the gym said I should try being a PT and I went, 'OK, I'll give that a go'. It turned out to be one of the best decisions I've ever made."

As PTs go, Mudge is definitely solid – to say the least. At one point in the shoot he grabs an MF staffer to demonstrate how to get more out of seated rows (think "pulling the handle apart", basically), and at another he shares his top tip for seated leg extensions (squeeze a water bottle between your thighs for hamstring activation). He's into teaching as well as getting ripped, and it comes across. And, in an age when less scrupulous trainers are happy to repackage the same programme for every client and email it over without any further input, he insists on being able to interact with trainees via FaceTime or Skype. "You can only sell shit once," he says.

Instagram, according to Mudge, has been both "the best thing and the worst thing for fitness. A lot of people spend their time looking at guys and just asking, 'Why aren't I in this shape?' On the other hand, people with CF or their mums and

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Our star trainer's advice for getting more from life

You don't need to look for your passion

"It's the thing you do that makes the hours melt away, and you don't worry about how much time you've spent doing it. I'm doing something I love, so the fact that it's helping other people at the same time, and I can make a decent living out of it, actually makes me feel kind of guilty."

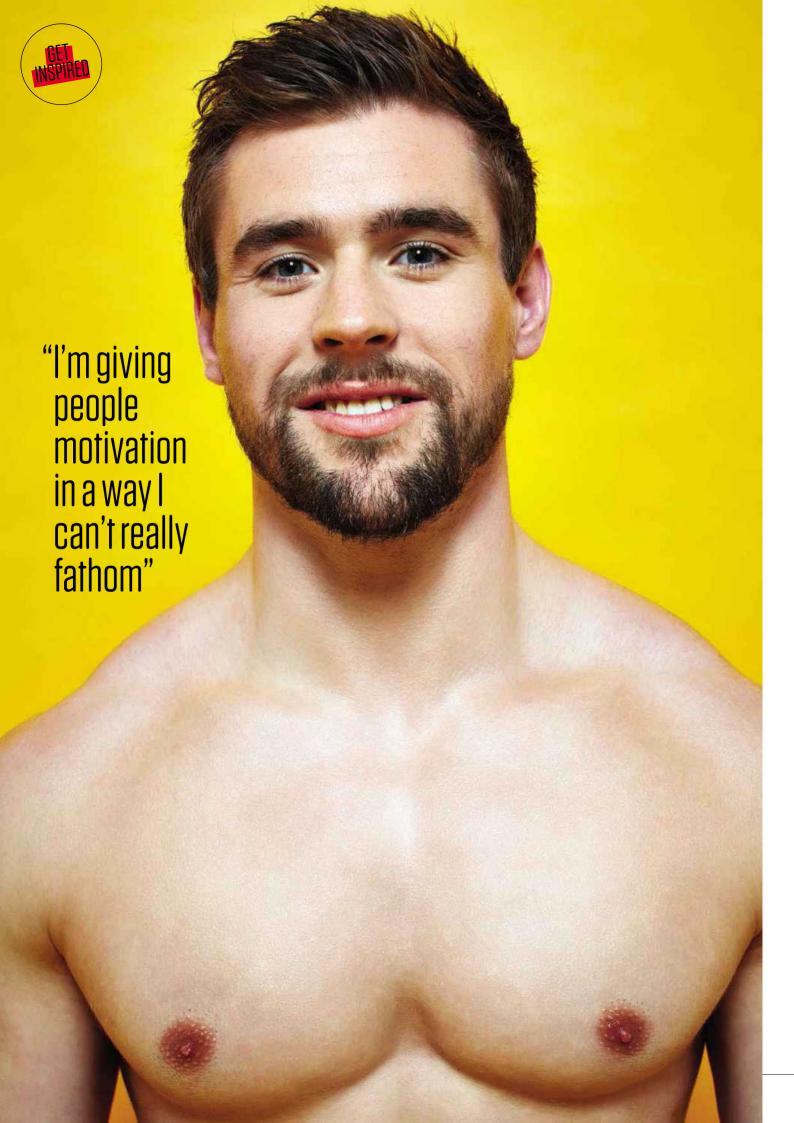
Think about the why

"With diet plans, if I tell someone they can't have something, it's like saying, 'Don't think of pink elephants'. It's human instinct that they'll want it. But if you explain to them that, say, sugar spikes your insulin so it's best to save it for post-workout, it's easier to follow."

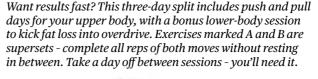
Don't overcomplicate things

"In life or the gym. The classic five-day split is a perfect example: high-level bodybuilders do chest/bis, back/tris because after training for years, they need to hammer themselves with volume on each body part. You don't. People who've been training for five years could still get massive gains from full-body workouts."





(in three hours a week)















1 Incline dumbbell press

Sets 4 Rens 12

Sit on an incline bench and press the dumbbells overhead. Don't fully extend your arms - keep your shoulder blades pinched at the back. Also, instead of pushing the weights straight up, imagine you're squeezing them towards each other in a triangle shape.

2 Standing dumbbell press

Sets 4 Rens 15

Stand tall with the dumbbells at your shoulders. Press them overhead, then pause and lower slowly. Bracing your core and glutes will help you shift more weight.

3A Incline dumbbell five

Sets 3 Rens 8-12

Lie on an incline bench with arms slightly bent and a dumbbell in each hand. Lower the dumbbells until you feel the stretch in your pecs, then press up. Squeeze your pecs at the top of the move.

4A Arnold press

Sets 3 Rens 8-12

Sit holding a pair of dumbbells with your arms by your sides and palms facing away. Curl up, then totate your hands and press up in one move so your palms end up facing forwards, then reverse the move slowly.

4B Dumbbell lateral raise

Sets 3 Rens 20

Sitting or standing, hold a pair of dumbbells by your sides. Keep vour arms in line with your torso as you raise them, pointing your thumbs slightly downwards.

5Close-grip bench press

Sets 4 Reps 20/15/12/10

Lie on a bench with your hands shoulder-width apart on the bar. Bring it down to your chest slowly, then explode upward. Add more weight as you reduce the reps for each set.



Sets 3 Reps 15

Standard, but remember to pause for a second at the top of each rep, squeezing your pecs.





1Chin-up

Sets **4** Reps **8-12**

Hold a pull-up bar with palms facing you and pull up until your head is over the bar. Lower slowly



Sets 3 Reps 12

Set up a bar in the corner of the gym, bend at the hips to hold it in one hand, then row it up until it touches your chest. Pause and lower under control.



3 Plate shruq

Sets 3 Reps 16

Hold a set of plates in both hands and shrug. Do the first eight reps slowly with a 4sec pause at the top, then do the next eight reps as quickly as possible.



4 Deadlift

Sets 3 Reps 10

Stand next to a barbell on the floor with your feet shoulderwidth apart and your hands just outside your knees. Drive your hips forward to lift the bar.



5 Dumbbell 21s

Sets 3 Reps 21

Do three mini-sets of seven reps: seven partial curls using just the bottom part of the curl, seven using the middle part of the move and seven full curls.



1Barbell back squat

Sets 4 Reps 8 Start with the bar across your back and your feet shoulderwidth apart, toes pointing slightly outwards. Lower but don't pause at the bottom – then push up but don't stop at the top of the move.



Walking pulse lunge

Sets 4 Reps 10 each leg Holding a dumbbell in each hand, take a big step forward, then 'pulse' on your leading leg - basically do a small half-lunge movement without moving your feet. Repeat on each rep.



2B Plank iack

Sets 4 Reps 30

Get into a plank position, forearms on the floor. Jump your feet out until they're double shoulderwidth apart, then jump them back together. Repeat, double-quick.



3 Squat iump

Sets 4 Reps 10

Lower into a squat, then explode up off the ground. Reset your legs between reps to get as much height as possible.



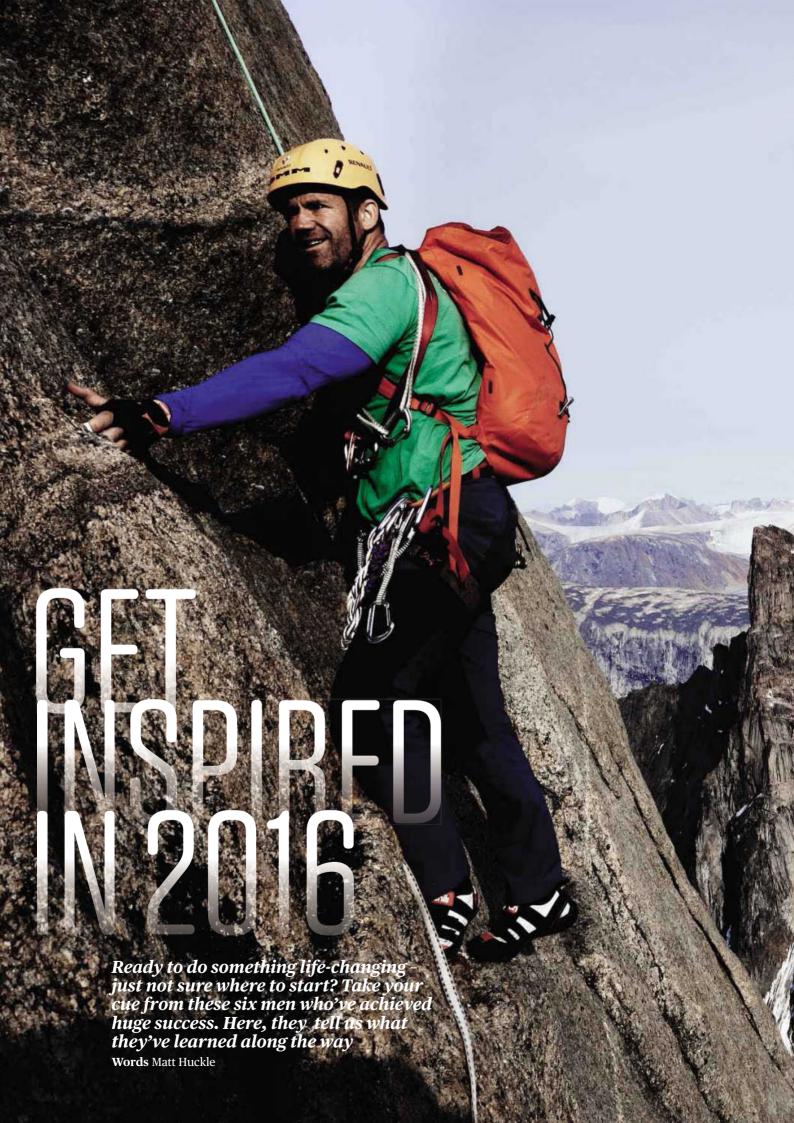
4Standing calf raise

Sets **10** Reps **10**

Stand on a step or weight plate on your tiptoes on one leg, then raise and lower. Keep the rests between sets as short as possible. Ten seconds is the goal.



Workout photography Tom Miles Model Greg Cornthwaite







LIVE FOR ADVENTURE

TV presenter Steve Backshall, 42, never fails to get stuck in on shows like Deadly 60, Secret Wilderness and Lost Land of the Volcano. But the man who's volunteered to be bitten by bullet ants and scaled dizzying mountains firmly believes adventure starts at home

- ➤ I did a mountain expedition in Venezuela a few months ago, which was one of the scariest things I have ever done. We were hanging on a vertical stone face for six days with rocks coming thundering past our ears the entire time. It was awful.
- > I genuinely thought, "Somebody could die here" on that trip. I very rarely get that feeling.
- > A huge crocodile swam straight past our team in Botswana. He was big enough to take down a buffalo, let alone one of us. We just saw this big cloud of sand with my cameraman inside it. I thought he had been taken by the crocodile. Somehow he managed to get out of it all right.
- > I'm not massively addicted to home comforts anyway.
- **>** You never know what you will find on an expedition: an animal that you've never seen, or being the first person ever to place your hand on a certain chunk of rock. It's something I find very special.
- ➤ Adventure doesn't have to be big. I get massively excited by finding moths in my garden or seeing types of bat I haven't seen before. When I am back in the UK, I find myself spending a tremendous amount of time camping and that for me is an absolute joy.
- > We are outdoor animals, whether we realise it or not. Physically and emotionally we need to be outside and active. If we don't have that we're more likely to be obese or suffer psychological or emotional problems.
- ➤ I was a fully fledged writer who'd published two books and written lots of articles in newspapers and magazines but I was still living with my parents. I thought, "Hold on, this isn't working." Then I tried TV.
- ➤ I probably wouldn't be on TV if it was easier to make money writing.
- > I'm not going to pretend for a second that I got into this because I wanted to inspire children. I got into it because I wanted to have big adventures and enjoy myself. But I realised some of my programmes, particularly *Deadly 60*, were having a big impact on kids and all of a sudden there was a responsibility. It's vital to me now.
- > When working with big animals, you do not run. Ever. That's one of the first things you are taught. It triggers a predatory response a tiger or lion will chase you even if it wasn't interested in you before.
- > I was filming with tiger sharks in the Bahamas. For five days they pretty much ignored us. Then one day the cameraman and I decided we would go for a dive at dusk, which is when tiger sharks are most active. We were in the water for about three minutes because the tiger sharks came at us in a totally different manner. We had to thump them off with our cameras to stop them getting stuck into us.
- > You start to learn the body language. If a shark's in an aggressive mood it will have its back arched and its mouth open, and it'll be moving in an angular motion. If those things aren't happening, you can swim alongside them in relative safety.
- ➤ The key when working with animals is to make sure you don't do anything silly that's going to leave you with long-term problems.

-

Create your own adventure in 2016

Backshall's simple tips to get you started

1 Forget the passport

"The most important thing is to know that adventures start at home – it doesn't have to be in far-off, exotic parts of the world. We have fabulous wild wonders here in this country."

2 Start small

"You can start by going pond dipping in your local park, looking for bugs in the bushes or learning birdsong you hear in your garden. That's how kids and all kinds of people who aren't necessarily into this can get started."

3 Brave the weather

"Go for a walk in the hills. You might not always like the weather here but you should make the most of it – the elements are much more extreme in other places."



The social butterfly

The Body Coach Joe Wicks burst onto the fitness scene thanks to a unique mix of training smarts, effortless charm and a knack for getting retweets. His 90-day workout plan has been a huge success, making him one of the most influential PTs of 2015.

What you can learn from him

Consistency beats one moment of genius. Yes, Wicks has half a million Instagram followers now, but he spent months posting three times a day to get there. Don't give up too soon if it seems hard.



The leading man

Chris Pratt could easily have kept the laughs coming playing dopey, doughy Andy Dwyer in Parks And Recreation. Instead, in 2014 he turned heads by getting ripped to play Star Lord in Guardians Of The Galaxy and he stayed in shape to play the lead in 2015's Jurassic World.

What you can learn from him Small changes can make big differences – if you keep them up. "Six months, no beer" was Pratt's explanation for going from comically tubby to superhero ripped.

SUCCEED IN BUSINESS

Tough Mudder is now a lucrative global phenomenon, but its British creator Will Dean, 34, says the key to success is to put passion in your business and not to go hunting for riches



- ➤ In business you have to be unfailingly optimistic and constantly paranoid all at once. You have to think it's all going to be great but that any given thing could screw it up at any given time.
- > It's bloody scary starting a company and getting something off the ground.
- **> Better to try and fail** than never to have a go.
- > I remember the moment I knew we were on to something. We'd organised an event and hoped 500 people might take part. It was me in a tiny office with a couple of interns, telling myself it would be OK.
- > We sold 200 tickets in one day. Ten days later we'd sold 500. I was thinking, "Bloody hell I didn't have a clue we'd get this many people". It's a good problem to have but at the time we were totally unprepared for it.
- ➤ I got my MBA at Harvard Business School and most Harvard MBAs say they're going to sell a million units. Even if they just sell a thousand they're pretty pleased. I read the business plan I wrote in 2008 and it says by 2015 we'll have 10,000 people doing our event. By 2015 we had two million.
- ➤ People write a lot about who invented obstacle course races. Does it matter? It's like saying a chef's food isn't good because he didn't invent the recipe. We do it better than other people.
- ➤ I can only credit myself with one moment of genius in life and that's probably still a generous observation.
- **> Tough Mudder is about teamwork.** Yes, people want it to be challenging but it has to be fun as well. Just tough on its own is miserable.
- > It's not about winners and losers. That's just not the ethos.
- **> Not everything is a race.** If you climb Everest no-one would ask you what time you did it in.
- **>** An ultramarathon runner can still enjoy a fun 5K. It doesn't have to be the toughest thing they've done in their life to be worthwhile.
- > The best business advice I was ever given is to surround yourself with great people who think differently to you. Have a diverse team of people who bring different things to the table.
- **> Enjoy the journey and live in the now.** It's so easy to lose sight of what you're doing in the moment.
- ➤ The reason I started Tough Mudder was absolutely not because I thought it was the best path to riches.
- > Making money for the sake of money isn't that exciting.
- **> Confidence and arrogance are very different.** Confidence is believing you can do things. Arrogance is thinking you're better than other people.
- > I'm incredibly proud of what we've achieved. I don't think that's boastful or arrogant. I think we should be proud of it.







COME BACK FROM ROCK BOTTOM

Jim Roberts, 28, had both his legs amputated below the knee after being struck with a severe case of meningitis. After recovering he started playing wheelchair rugby and is now one of the key playmakers in the GB team

- ▶ It was caught late. By the time they'd realised it was meningitis my kidneys had shut down.
- > I'd been at the pub the night before but didn't drink much. I was ill through the night and when my dad woke me for work he assumed I was hungover and gave me paracetamol and water.
- > Our housekeeper took me to the doctor but I was told it was the flu. On the way home I passed out and she said "sod it, I'm taking him to hospital." By mid afternoon I was in a coma.
- It was a student doctor who caught it. Or so I'm told. I was unconscious for ten days.
- **>** When I woke I was hallucinating. For five days, every time I opened my eyes the room was different. I remember my brother laughing because I was describing things that were ridiculous.
- ➤ I was in a lot of pain. I had dressing changes twice a week they were pretty brutal. It got to the point where I was on a lot of painkillers and in a lot of misery.
- > It was six months before they decided to amputate my legs below the knee. They'd taken my toes off but they were trying to get the skin back over the rest of the leg. It was actually me who asked to speak to a meningitis specialist about having the amputations. I just wanted it done.
- ➤ I was depressed. I wasn't eating. I dropped about half my body weight. I ended up suffering a cardiac arrest and putting myself back into intensive care for a week.
- **You have to hit the bottom** before you start to put yourself back together.
- **>** I'd recovered and was in a good mindset before I got into wheelchair rugby. It has helped me in my everyday life but I'd definitely come through the worst of it way before I started playing.
- **Murderball is the original name** but we call it wheelchair rugby. I started playing at uni.
- **I was still doing my architecture degree.** I had a job to go to straight after uni but it turned out they'd had to lay people off and weren't going to be able to take me on.
- > I went to the States to play for a season. I'm getting a lot more court time in the crucial games.
- > When you first get in a wheelchair you don't want to have anything to do with it. You don't want to associate with people in wheelchairs. You'd have to admit you were in one too.

Programme yourself for game time

The British wheelchair rugby team works with sports psychologist Steve Peters. "According to Dr Peters, your brain has three modes," says Roberts. "You've got the human, computer and chimp."

Human

"When you're thinking about things logically and making decisions. This is the slowest mode as your mind has to process information."

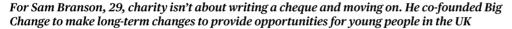
Chimp

"This is your primal and instinctive side that can't control impulses or emotions."

Computer

"At this level things happen automatically – your body just reacts rather than having to make decisions. If we can get ourselves working at this level we'll be much faster on the court."





- ➤ We've taken the model of venture capital and tech incubators and adapted it for charity. That way we aim to find and accelerate the impact of concepts that have big potential.
- ➤ Rather than run programmes ourselves we find the best ideas out there that address gaps in how we help young people to thrive equipping them with skills like resilience and confidence.
- > The focus shouldn't just be on fixing symptoms.
- > We're building an active community of people with shared values.
- > In 2014 we did the Virgin Strive Challenge to inspire people and raise awareness around the importance of resilience. It comprised three marathons, rowing across the Channel, cycling 1,000km across France, then hiking for seven days across the Alps to scale the Matterhorn.
- ➤ I joked before the challenge that we might have to martyr ourselves on the Matterhorn to further our cause. I came way closer to that than I would have liked.
- > Altitude sickness isn't great. I could hardly breathe. I was dry retching at the same time as crying. To top it all you feel so vulnerable 4,000m up, with nothing to stop your fall if you slip.
- > We're doing something even bigger in 2016: hiking 90km from the Matterhorn into northern Italy, cycling the length of the country, swimming to Sicily, mountain biking the foothills of Mount Etna and running a half marathon up to the summit.
- **> Be passionate about what you're raising money for.** That's the main thing. You don't have to do big challenges to make a difference.
- **>** It's not just a four-week challenge. There's a year of planning and training beforehand. Most people can't afford to spend that time organising large-scale challenges to raise money.
- ➤ Your local charity events need your support. They're an invaluable way to raise money for local people, keep fit and benefit from a fantastic sense of community.
- > There's a fine balance between doing something that's impressive enough to encourage others to donate to your cause and something that isn't going to kill you.



The gym avoider

With a child to raise and a business to run, Andrew Tracey says he doesn't have time for the gym. That doesn't mean he's not in superb shape, though: he works out at home, outdoors or wherever he can whenever he gets the opportunity.

What you can learn from him Hard work beats fancy planning every time.
Ten sets of ten pull-ups, press-ups and dips is a Tracey staple that can be done anywhere for size-enhancing results.



The life changer

Inspiration doesn't just mean fundraisers and making people healthier. Helping your community is equally vital. Ex-gang member Sheldon Thomas walked away from his former life and started Gangsline, a company dedicated to helping young people make the right choices. Thomas has had a real impact on reducing gang violence in east London, working tirelessly to impeat the lives of people who've made bad endices.

What you can learn from him You can turn your life around at any point and you don't have to necessarily look elsewhere to make a difference. Start in your community.



After Tristan Almada, 30, lost his mother to a preventable cancer he resolved to help eradicate it for good, creating the NOMAN campaign in the process



It's hard to even talk about human papillomavirus (HPV). which causes cervical cancer, oral cancer, anal cancer and all these other nasty things. They account for 5% of all cancers.

- > There's a vaccine for HPV. Our goal is to eliminate the virus and in turn the cancer it causes. I think we can get to a point where no-one has to go through what my family and I went through.
- > About 80% of people contract HPV at some point in their lives. Most people fight it off without realising.
- > Some cancers are better known than others and it's not always clear why. Maybe it's because there's a stigma around the body part or it because there aren't that many celebrities who've had it.
- > People affected by breast and prostate cancer have been able to create a community who aren't afraid to discuss their diagnosis. We're trying to create that for HPV-related cancers with the NOMAN campaign, which is short for No Man Is An Island.
- > I want to help redress the stigma as well as trying to do something life-affirming something exceptional and extraordinary that people across the world can rally around.
- > We've raised \$3m since 2010.
- **A number of obstacles** stand in the way of universal vaccination of HPV. They can be tackled if we bring the isolated groups together.
- > We do things like crazy trans-Med rowing challenges, and people get excited. Then once they learn what the event is for, what HPV is and that it can be prevented, they want to help.
- **>** When you ask for support you need to show how committed you are. The bigger the ask, the more uncomfortable the challenge should be.
- **Completing the events is a high** but the most exciting thing for me is that other people actually care about the issue enough to do the challenges too.
- > When we were rowing from Barcelona to Ibiza in 2013 the sea was unstable. I had two guys in my crew who were seasick and we still had 36 hours to go. The most frequent thought in my head was, "Why couldn't we have done a nice fundraising dinner in London?"
- > If my mother were still alive she would probably say, "It's great that you're doing all these events but you're making the people around you go through a lot of pain and suffering all in my name? You must have very good friends."
- **The second day of a challenge is the hardest.** It's like the slump in the middle of a marathon.
- > In hindsight it's only by getting into those dark places by pushing ourselves to the limit that we're really able appreciate success when it comes.
- > The struggle we put ourselves through to raise money is tough but we volunteer for it and it's just for a day. It's nothing compared with what cancer sufferers face.



The comeback kid

Aussie actor Liam Hemsworth had to grit his teeth and smile when his older brother Chris snatched the career-changing role of Thor from under his nose after Liam had auditioned first. He kept plugging away and was eventually cast as one of the leads in *The Hunger Games* movie series opposite Jennifer Lawrence, launching himself onto the Hollywood A-list.

What you can learn from him You're going to have setbacks: don't let them define you. OK, you might not be battling your sibling for film roles, but understanding you're not going to be successful 100% of the time is important.

BEAT



British Superbike Championship rider James Ellison, 35, broke his hip and knee in a high-speed crash in 2014. Although doctors told him he wouldn't even walk for months, he was back on the podium after seven weeks. He returned in the 2015 season and finished third







- > There was a lot of pressure to win the race at Brands Hatch. Maybe I was riding a bit angry.
- > I wobbled but another rider was right behind me so I kept going rather than slow down. I thought, "I'm still fine. I'm still fine."
- ➤ The bike flipped me up in the air. My femur held firm I had a metal pin the full length of it from a previous break but the

top of my hip snapped and I ripped a hole in my kneecap.

- > After I hit the wall I remember being surprised that it wasn't worse. I was thinking, "Fucking hell, that went well". It wasn't until I stood back up that I realised how badly my leg was damaged. I guess that's adrenaline for you.
- ➤ The doctor said I couldn't put pressure on it for two months. After three months I'd be able to use crutches but I wouldn't walk before that. Well, that was his opinion.
- > There's a guy who had exactly the same injury as me back in March. Exactly the same break, surgery and metalwork. He still hasn't been on a bike.

- > Riding a superbike is incredibly demanding on the body. The thing is 165kg, they're 220bhp and you have to wrestle it around the track. Physically anyone could do one lap but we do 20 per race and two races a weekend. That's the difference. Fitness is key.
- > If I'm at home the team will still pay me but that's not what I want. I want to go out and race bikes and win. The only way to get healthy was a lot of hard work, eating the right food and doing the right exercises or my muscles would waste away.
- > I was walking 14 days after the crash.
- ➤ I think the surgeon got a bit annoyed with me by the end. I kept telling him "You don't understand, I've got stuff to do and races to win".
- > I know I'm not special but if there's something I can do to speed up my recovery then I'll do it.
- ➤ You need to set yourself a goal no matter how unrealistic it may seem. It gives you focus. It doesn't matter if you don't hit it, so long as you've given 100% trying. You'll still have banked all the work you put into getting there.
- > I was back on the bike after five weeks and on the podium after seven. That was an emotional moment.

Recover from injury

Ellison's advice to help you get back on your feet in double-quick time

1 Get a second opinion

"Doctors cover themselves when they give recovery times. If they think you need four weeks, they'll tell you six. A second opinion can give you a better idea. Be sensible, though – don't rush and re-injure yourself."

2 Eat right

"Find out if certain nutrients can help your recovery time. For example, zinc is useful at repairing ligament damage. Your body will heal much faster if you give it the resources it needs to repair."

3 Get moving

"Don't sit with your feet up if you can help it. Obviously you have to work around your injuries but moving about will increase your circulation and get blood (and with it, nutrients) to your damaged area."



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LOOK GOOD, FEEL GOOD. JÖGÖDD

2016 is your year to get fit, achieve your goals and raise money for charity. Here's the MF guide to the best events

Words Matt Huckle, Joel Snape



If you're running a marathon for charity, you might find people telling you what time they expect you to do it in for their money. Side-step the issue by running a different race. The Royal Parks 50km sounds like a dramatic distance to cover, but at only 8km further than a marathon it's not much harder (and you probably won't face sniffy looks if you take six hours to finish). royalparksultra.com





KEY











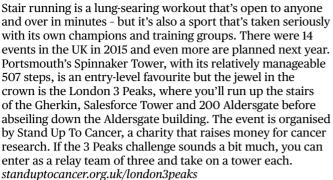
Ride a bike to France 🕧 🧀 🔞 🕕

London to Paris is one option but there are more picturesque - and harder - alternatives for the gent in need of a stiffer test. The Roubaix Challenge, for instance, is a 250km charity bike ride that takes two days to cycle from London to the beautiful city of Lille in northern France. Near your destination is the town of Roubaix (famous for the epic Paris-Roubaix pro cycle race) and after the two-day run to Lille, you have the option of taking part in a Paris-Roubaix Challenge on day three. Amateur cyclists can sign up to ride the route the elite Paris-Roubaix cyclists will tackle a day later in the professional race, taking in some classic cobbled sections to really make you feel like a professional. Pick one of three distances depending on how knackered you are.

London-Paris londonparisbikeride.co.uk **Roubaix Challenge**

globaladventurechallenges.com/uk

Run up some stairs









Sign up for a fight

When you're gearing up for a 10K or even a marathon, a missed training session or a night in the pub isn't the end of the world. Agree to fight another man, though, and the difference is stark; every time you're tempted to have a night off with Netflix or open the biscuit tin, you'll be wondering if your unseen nemesis is doing the same - or if he's in some darkened gym somewhere, pounding a bag like Rocky III's Clubber Lang. To put it another way, sign up for a fight and you'll never have a problem with motivation. Tell people you're training for a fight and donating the money from ticket sales to charity, and heads will turn. Bonus: people who don't like you can still be persuaded to pay in the hope they'll get to see you lose. If you've never stepped into a ring or cage before, Fighting For Charity offers entry-level white-collar bouts and events, and the proceeds are donated to charity. fightingforcharity.com



How to raise more cash

There's more to fundraising than sticking a note up on the wall at work and hoping for the best. Here are some tips from the men who've raised millions

1 Be passionate

"It's the most important factor if you want to make a worthwhile contribution." says Sam Branson, who's taking part in the Virgin Strive Challenge 2016 (see p68). "Passion is infectious. If you feel strongly about the project or issue you're raising money for, you'll find that people really want to get involved and support you."

2 Shout about vour cause

"We raised \$1 million for our first event," says Tristan Almada, founder of the NOMAN Group, which raises money for HPV (see p69). "We'd never have come close if the people involved weren't out there telling people how much it meant to them.'

3 Don't underestimate it

"Never underestimate how difficult it can be to raise money." says Branson. "Don't give up, but be prepared that not everything might go guite the way you imagine it will. It's not just the challenge you're doing that's tough."

4 Know your limits

"Push hard, but not too hard. Don't set vourself a challenge that's way beyond your limits," says Branson. At the same time Almada stresses the importance of getting people excited. "If you want to impress people, you must be willing to push yourself out of your comfort zone to some degree," he says.

5 Knock on as many doors as you can

If you don't ask you don't get. "People's main obstacle is asking for money," says Almada. "Because what I'm doing is so personal to me, it's easy for me to knock on literally anyone's door. Sometimes they say no, but more often than not people are interested by your sacrifice and commitment."



Become a survivalist

The Commando Series obstacle course event created to raise money for the Royal Marines' Charitable Trust Fund - is a new event that takes place over a purpose-built 6km route at Hever Castle in Kent. Where it differs from other events

is that before you tackle the obstacles, you get the opportunity to camp overnight and take a survival training course, learning everything from hunting and shelter-building to fire-making and navigation. *commandoseries.co.uk*

Race from London to Brighton off-road

@ 🔞 🚱

There's a well-known road version that's fairly easy, but the 119km off-road edition – run by the British Heart Foundation – is 50% longer and the biggest off-road event in Europe. Given the varied terrain, it's a far more interesting and challenging test of your fitness, with stunning views of the South Downs thrown in for good measure. If you don't fancy doing it on wheels, you could run or even walk the route. <code>bhf.org.uk/get-involved</code>







Train alone

If you're not into group participation, don't worry: technology has removed the need to actually enter a race to do good. New app Charity Miles lets you turn hard-won cyber points into currency, which you can then donate to nine charities including

Autism Speaks, Stand Up to Cancer and Habitat for Humanity. Walking and running earn 25 cents per mile while cycling earns 10 cents per mile, and corporate sponsors will donate what you've earned. charitymiles.org



How to find a good (but different) cause

Before you automatically pick one of the big charities, consider one of the hundreds of smaller but equally important organisations. Here are five that deserve your attention

1 Amber Foundation

Amber works with young people who've been made homeless, misused drugs or alcohol or have a criminal record, and helps them gain the skills and confidence they need to get a job and a place to live. Your money can help the foundation provide a place for them to stay to get away from their toxic environments. amberweb.org

2 Age UK

A well-known but often overlooked charity, Age UK deserves your attention. Aging is an inevitable part of life, and it's sad that our elders aren't always looked after better. Age UK helps to keep older people involved in the community, campaigns for better laws around care and generally acts as a bridge that connects the elderly with the rest of society. ageuk.org.uk

3 NOMAN Campaign

The NOMAN Campaign's goal is to eliminate HPV, a virus that causes 5% of all cancers (as founder Tristan Almada explains on p69). A vaccine is already available, so your money would be pushing towards a highly achievable goal and could save thousands of lives every year.

4 Heart of England Forest

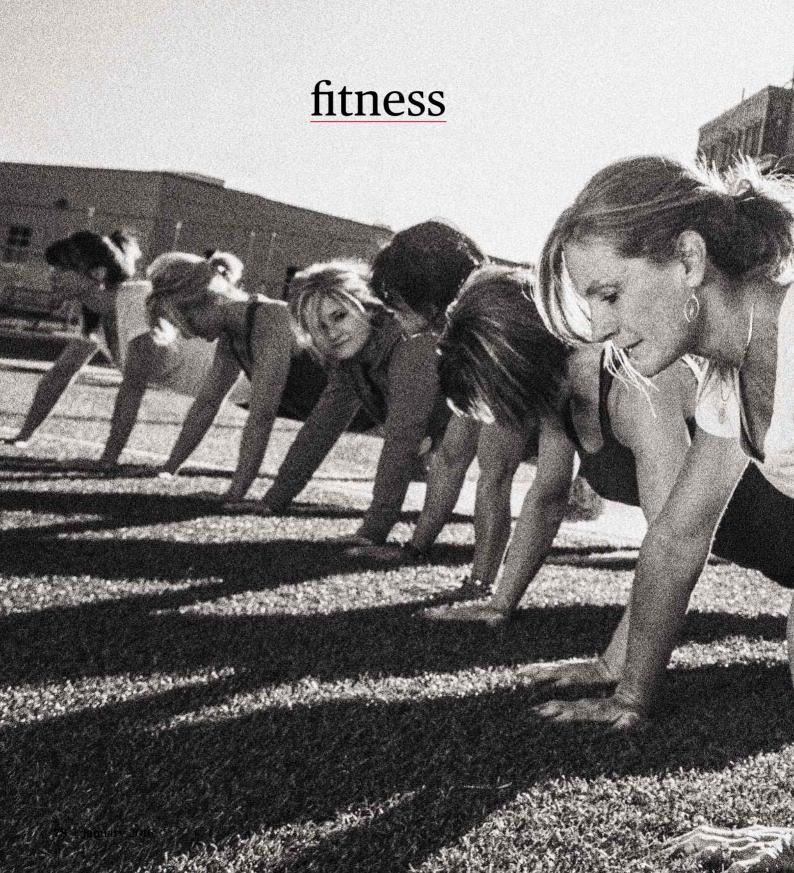
In a world where technology dominates our lives, it's important not to forget about nature. The Heart of England Forest is creating woodland to promote and preserve endangered wildlife and to retain some of Britain's natural beauty. *Men's Fitness* is actually owned by Heart of England Forest, so tell them we sent you. *heartofenglandforest.com*

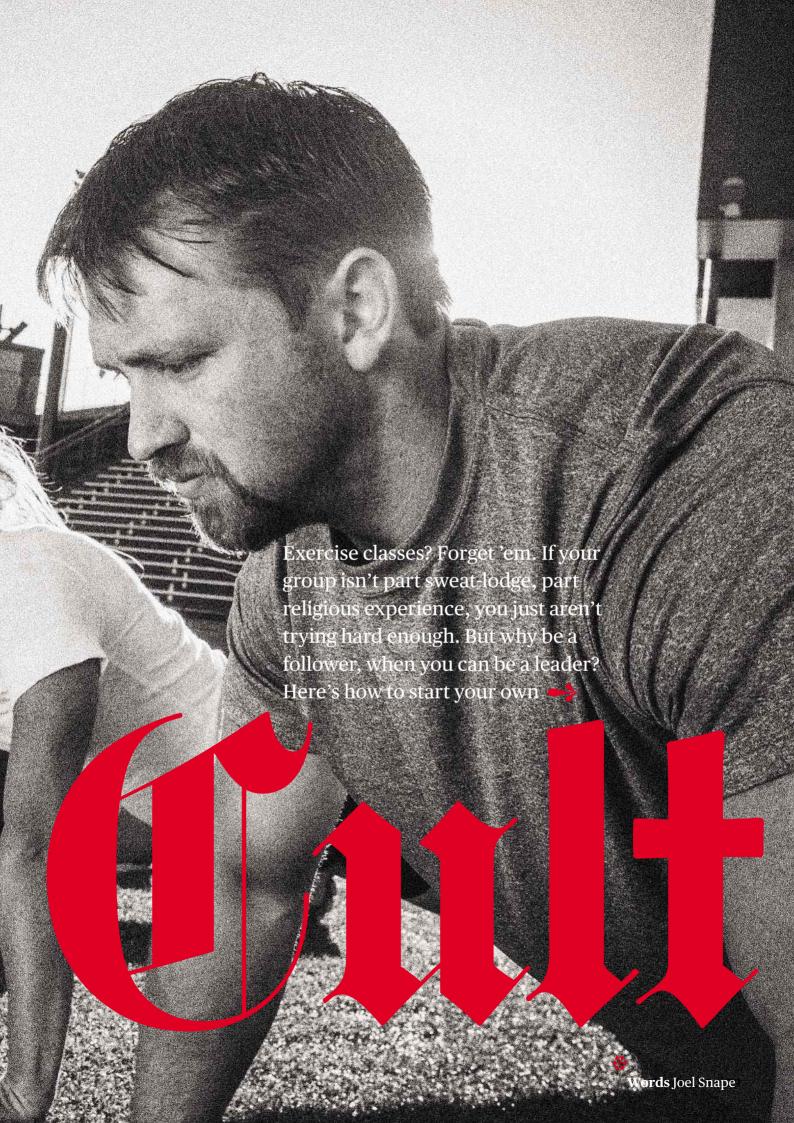
5 Your local charity

If you want to do some good in your local community, find someone running a project near you that would benefit from your help. Search the LocalGiving website by region to find one in your area. If it's time rather than money you want to give, the site also lets you find out which charities need volunteers. **localgiving.com**

How

<u>to</u> <u>start a</u>





Are you part of a fitness cult? Here's a better question. should you be? In the last half-decade every workout craze from CrossFit (gymnastics and weightlifting, done at high speed) to SoulCycle (group indoor cycling with dance music and choreography) and new fad IntenSati (lung-scorching cardio with "positive affirmations") has attracted the C-word, and it's not hard to see why. Charismatic leaders, rabidly enthusiastic followers, weird, clubby lingo and close-knit communities - these are the things that both cults and successful workout trends are good at. Devotion to the cause, total dedication, a sense of community: this is the stuff they encourage.

And this is fine. Humans are social animals, and we've been banding together to form groups for thousands of years - first, to hunt and survive, later to defend ourselves against other tribes, and now to yell at each other while we do press-ups. Just as inevitably, there's always a breaking point. Archaeological and anecdotal evidence suggests that whenever a group gets too large, a smaller group will split off and establish a new hierarchy, with its own rules, traditions and norms. In the most intense hierarchies, members abandon the outside world and hang out almost exclusively with like-minded people.

Yes, sometimes this goes wrong. But other times, it's a recipe for success. Or, to put it another way: if you *aren't* in a fitness cult, then maybe you should start one. Here's how to do it.

Step 1

Come up with a mission (and a name)

"Cultures of total dedication look crazy from the outside," says Peter Thiel, entrepreneur and author of startupbuilding book *Zero To One*. "But the difference between a cult and a startup is that cults tend to be fantastically wrong about one thing. People at a successful startup are fanatically right about one thing that other people have missed."

Traditionally, you could do this by "rediscovering" a forgotten form of training - kettlebells, say - but now that the market's getting crowded, squishing two fitness trends into one (military training and animal flow, say, or rowing and ballet) is the best option.

Done? Now you need a name. Two smashed-together words for easy trademarking is the standard, but that's easier said than done. CrossFit is good (and selfexplanatory) but innumerable variations already exist: SEALFit, SpartanFit, VikingFit, PunchFit. You can mention kit (SoulCycle is all about the bikes, BarreCore uses a ballet-style barre) but that limits your options. Include a foreign word if you can pull it off - IntenSati is a mix of intention and sati. the word for mindfulness in the Indian language of Pali - but be aware that you risk alienating your audience. Still stuck? You'll find our best and most hardcore-sounding suggestions over the page.

Step 2

Create your own reality

SoulCycle spin rooms come with oversized candles, trance music and nightclub lighting, while CrossFit gyms tend to be in railway arches or warehouses. If you live in a remote barn or you've got your own gym space, this bit's easy. If not, you may need to be creative.

"Impose a form of selfcensorship," suggests Anthony Pratakis, a psychologist and co-author of The Age Of Propaganda. "If it's not of the cult, it's of the devil." For CrossFitters, for instance, non-functional movements (think biceps curls) and cablecross machines have no place in the gym. The flipside: this means certain movements and workouts (for CrossFit, this includes back squats and pullups) are especially important. This isn't a bad thing. "You should always have 'indicator' exercises that you track to make sure performance is improving," says renowned US strength coach Joe DeFranco. Laser-target a few moves that every single member of your group competes in, and you'll improve.

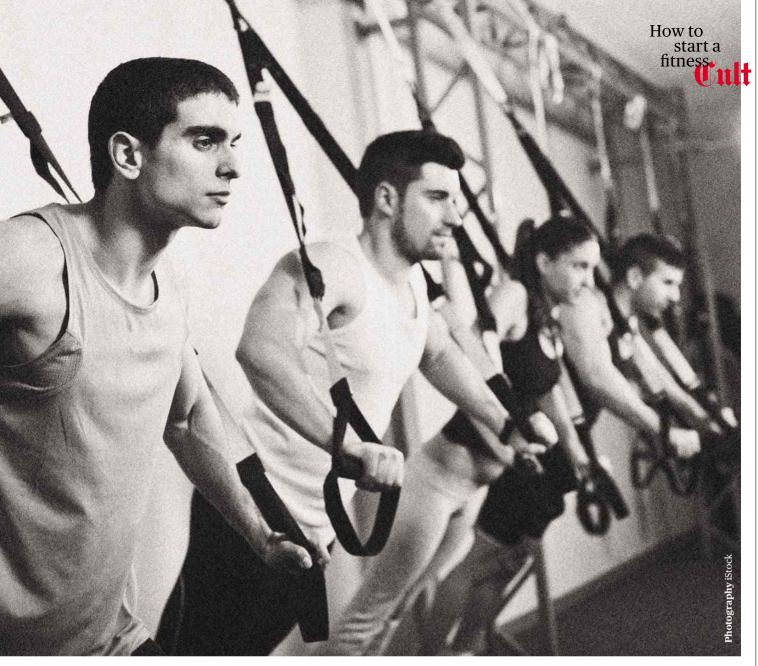
It also helps to have a place where you can bellow out loud. A Chinese study found that people on stationary bikes maintained higher levels of muscle activation when they could yell during a workout, which translated to better performance over a longer period. So get your own space and start speaking in tongues, and you'll set PBs more regularly.



66

Devotion to
the cause, total
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workout trends
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these

"



Step 3

Create a hierarchy

In standard cults, the longestserving (or most loval) members are rewarded with special favours, better spots in the pecking order and closer contact with the leader. In the US, SoulCycle's basic rate for a group cycling class is \$34 (plus an extra \$3 a class for the required clip-in shoes), but if you aren't logged on to their website at noon on a Monday to book in then you're usually doomed to the purgatory of the wait list. You can, of course, pray to the #SoulFairy on Twitter, or pay \$3,500 for a Super Soul series of 50 classes that gives you early access to reservations - and then there's

a chance that you can make it to the coveted front rank of the class. Scarcity works, and people go mad for it.

Don't want to base your hierarchy on cold, hard cash? Fair. SoulCycle rival Flywheel uses huge screens in the gym to let you compare your performance with other cyclists', while heart rate training system OrangeTheory uses a similar set-up. The benefits of this arrangement have been shown by a study from Kansas University, in which subjects who did plank holds alongside "expert' partners could hold the position for 33% longer than people left doing the move on their own. The lesson? Competition works, especially if you want everyone in the cult - er, group - to improve.

Step 4

Talk up the movement's figureheads

IntenSati takes this literally: it calls its instructors "leaders", and its founder, Patricia Moreno, regularly takes charge of sold-out 11am weekday classes. New yoga movement Jivamukti - hip-hop impresario Russell Simmons is a fan - sells "guru photos" of its co-founders Sharon Gannon and David Life in the studio's attached boutique at \$2.50 a postcard-sized pop. Some New Yorkers reportedly plan their whole days around making it to a class run by one of SoulCycle's "master trainers", and top CrossFit

athletes play to sold-out seminar tours.

One crucial point: according to a study conducted by Buffalo University's School of Management, humble leaders - ones who lead by example, admit their mistakes, and recognise their followers' strengths - are more effective than power-mad ones, and are good predictors that a movement will grow. CrossFit's Rich Froning is the perfect example: he works hard, confesses to having weaknesses (after messing up a rope climb workout in 2012, it's become one of his strongest moves) and always, always stays around after completing the Workout of the Day to bellow encouragement at other trainees. Exemplary.

Step 5

Recruit more members

When Chuck Palahniuk's Fight Club set down its first and second rules of not talking about the club, it was slyly acknowledging that bans like that simply teach people to break rules. People like showing off about doing hard things, and with a little encouragement they'll do all your marketing for you. Encourage followers to share workouts on Instagram and Twitter, and remind them to let colleagues know about what they're up to. Even if it doesn't produce any new recruits, constantly talking about the cause will reinforce their own faith.

At this stage, it's a good idea to come up with some commonalities the members can bond around. This could be tough signature workouts (CrossFit's are named after girls or soldiers) or just a shared language - if you've ever been completely befuddled when a yoga teacher tells you to "flip your dog", you'll understand how this works. People want to be part of something, and part of being a group is, well, excluding outsiders who don't "get" it.

Step 6

Make increasing demands

"Start small, but keep it going," advises Pratakis. In "bad" cults, this might start with little favours and end with devotees handing over all their worldly possessions. In "good" cults, it's motivational.

At first, it might be enough to simply keep showing up to classes, or do the workouts without stopping. The longer you participate, though, the more that's expected. Eventually, the thinking goes, you should be able to lift more, finish faster and do more complex moves. In religious cults, long sermons and endless hours of vegpicking keep everyone from asking questions. In fitness cults, complicated nutrition rules and long stretching routines do a similar thing.

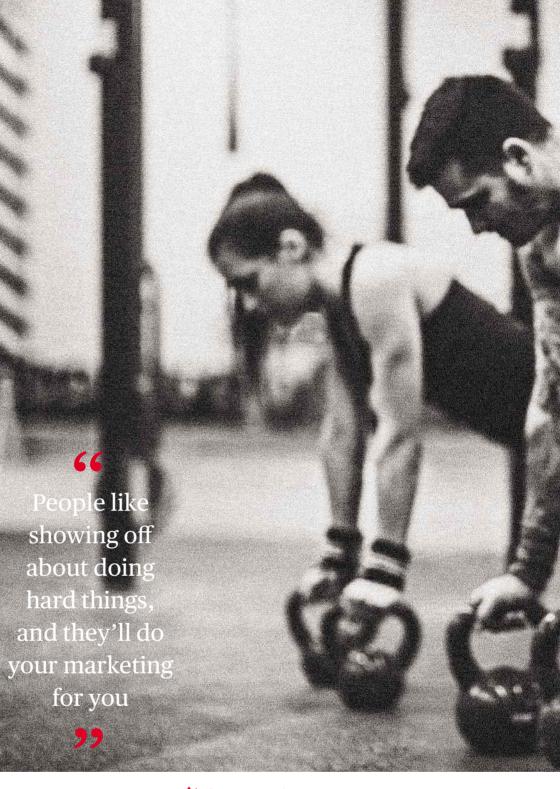
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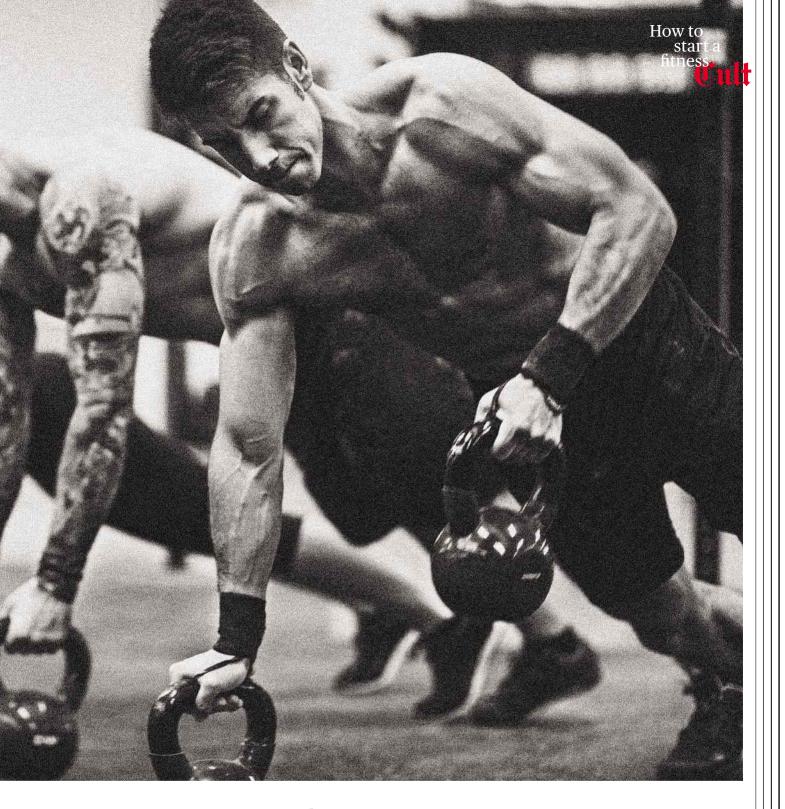
Keep everyone chasing the carrot

In cults, just as in life (and health), there's no final destination... except for the one that's always just tantalisingly around the corner. For those in the thrall of a televangelist, this is bad news, but for people who've become addicted to a new life

of kale shakes and kettlebell intervals, it could actually work out surprisingly well.

The studies are basically unanimous: short-term interventions do almost nothing for fitness, while all real change comes from lasting lifestyle changes - so constantly having objectives to chase isn't a bad idea. You might never make it to the Rapture, but go hard enough on the rower and it could still qualify as a religious experience.





Your Fitness Fad Name Generator

Still can't come up with a name? Here's our suggestion: one metal and one badass-sounding thing (add in some training science later, obviously). Simply pick two numbers between one and ten, combine the words and hey presto - you've started a fitness cult

1. Iron

6. Copper

6. Viking

2. Steel

7. Mercury

7. Barbarian

3. Tin

8. Platinum

8. Warrior

4. Zinc

9. Titanium

4. Gorilla

5. Knight

1. Samurai

3. Cowboy

2. Ninja

9. Gladiator

5. Tungsten

10. Strontium

10. Shark

THE LAWYERS TOLD US TO SAY

Dark side? Light side? It doesn't matter. Use the force, and you'll live better, train harder and be more productive. Don't worry about having patience, young Padawan, because we've assembled everything you need

Words Joel Snape **Illustrations** Dan Woodger



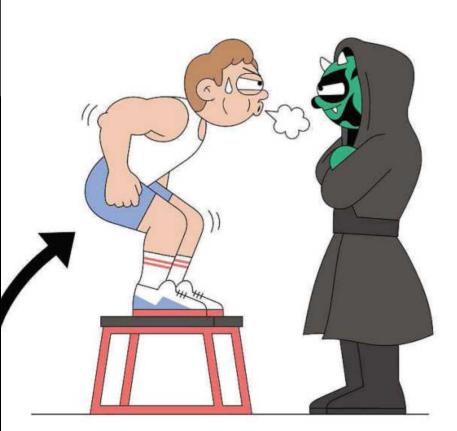
Betrayed by your protégé? In hiding from an intergalactic warmonger? Living in a swamp? Make it to 900 years anyway (or at least 80) by harnessing the new science of stress

You've been told to fear stress but... well, to paraphrase, fear leads to suffering. According to new research, how much stress you're subjected to isn't as important as your response to it.

"In stressful conditions, you'll experience physical changes like sweating, breathing faster and a pounding heart," says health psychologist Kelly McGonigal. "We usually interpret these as signs that we aren't coping well. Instead, look at them as a sign that your body's preparing itself to perform better."

This isn't just self-help babble: in a Harvard study, participants who were taught to reinterpret the stress-response as helpful to their performance were less anxious and more confident in tough situations. Their blood vessels also constricted less, putting less strain on their cardiovascular systems.

And there's more. "People who spend time caring for others show no stress-related increase in likelihood of dying," says McGonigal. "When you choose to view your stress response as helpful, you create the biology of courage, and when you choose to connect with others who are under stress, you can create resilience." Proud of you the little green chap would be.



Get more explosive like

Darth Maul

 His concentration could be better, but you can't fault the Sith Lord's raw leaping-about ability.
 Here's how to harness it

"You don't need to use a huge box to achieve maximum explosiveness" says Gym Jones trainer Rob MacDonald. "When you take your stretch reflex out of the equation your leg muscles have to work harder to land a 30cm jump. Start the movement by squatting down and holding the position for a second - don't bounce. Then explode up and land on the box with your legs straight if you can."

Do broad jumps - an excellent functional movement - too. "You'll go further if you concentrate on jumping up as well as forward. Place a small plate or water bottle on the ground in front of you and aim to leap over it. Clench your glutes before you leap for extra power."

If you're jumping for maximum height, don't squat all the way down. "Do a quarter squat, think 'fast arms' and explode upwards," says MacDonald. "The goal is 60cm."

Build Han Solo's confidence

 Being an intergalactic smuggler takes nerves of carbonite - and Han harnesses modern sports psychology to pull it off effortlessly

Remember it's OK to be negative

"People get obsessed with positive thinking," says sports psychologist Paul Russell (thepop.org.uk). "But sometimes, negative thoughts are reasonable. A better distinction is whether thoughts are helpful or unhelpful at a particular moment in time." Translation: if you're worried about attacking a lethal, moon-sized battle-station, that's fine. Just make sure it affects your performance in a positive way.

Plan for red flag points

There will always be moments when you're in danger of wobbling. The key is to recognise that and rehearse in advance. "A lot of professional fighters are fine when they're warming up, keeping busy," says Russell. "It's when they start walking to the ring that they can be shaken. At that point, you need an action plan to execute, and preferably one you've prepared ahead of time." Don't panic - and shoot first if necessary.

Make sure your preparation is thorough

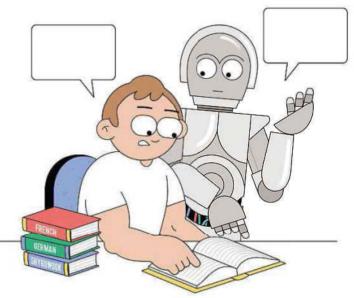
"A common choke point for boxers is the weigh-in," says Russell. "It's easy to let your confidence be determined by whether your opponent looks big or small, drained or fighting fit. But you can't control that: you have to take confidence from what vou've done to prepare." And if your friend's being eaten by a pit-monster but you've been inconveniently blinded, just remember all that shooting practice you did in case this sort of situation arose, and blast with assurance.

Understand that confidence is a choice

"The biggest thing is to be non-judgemental about your own actions," Russell explains. "If you make a mistake, it's just that: a mistake. It doesn't necessarily mean anything about you as a person. Take control, and understand that you can always make the choice to be confident... or not."



Learn languages like G-3PO



• Protocol droids speak six million space languages. Sid Efromovich only knows seven - but he's fluent in them, and convinced that anyone can be too

"The first thing to do is be happy to make mistakes," says Efromovich, a Brazil-born commodities trader turned teacher and "positive psychology" researcher who speaks English, Portuguese, Spanish, German, French, Italian and Mandarin. "If you think about how children learn, they don't say, 'I can't do that', they say, 'I haven't learned that yet'."

From there on, it's all about immersion. Aim to speak your chosen language every day. "If you can, find a buddy who speaks it too," says Efromovich. "Whenever you talk to them, speak *only* that language. It'll expose areas you're weak in and words you don't know."

Don't have a buddy? "I recommend what I call 'shower conversations', where you talk to yourself," says Efromovich. "They're almost as good as the real thing." And if you only want to remember one phrase, coo ya maya stupa* is a Huttese go-to.

86 | January 2016 * You weak-minded fool.







Luke Skywalker

Turn off the targeting computer in your personal starship and use "flow", the neurological state where you're effortlessly focused and productive. It's not just for Jedi, so here's how to harness it

Start single-tasking

"Flow demands long periods of uninterrupted concentration," savs the Flow Genome Project's co-founder Steven Kotler. "That means multi-tasking is out." Schedule a time in the day to "single-task", tell your colleagues you're doing it, then go off-grid.

Keep moving forward

"To achieve group flow, you need constant communication," says Kotler. "Use the first rule of improv: continue conversations with 'yes, and'. Listen to what's said, then build on it. Nothing blocks flow like negating a team member."

Look for a challenge

"The state of flow exists on the border between boredom and anxiety," explains Kotler. "The challenge you set yourself needs to be slightly greater than the skills you bring to the table." If you find you're bored at work, it's time to look for new responsibilities.

Get Wookiee strength

• There are no gyms on Chewbacca's home planet of Kashyyyk. Use drills from natural movement discipline MovNat to build arm-ripping power - no kit required

For strength, use... the one-armed hang

It builds shoulder stability and obstacle-race dangling power - helpful even if you don't live in a treehouse. Hang from a bar, keeping your shoulders "active", which means tugged slightly down, so you're not in a dead hang.

For power, use... the pull-up reach

To build that explosive rip, do a pull-up, and then - while you're briefly "weightless" at the top of the move - quickly take one hand off the bar and reach upwards before

you grab hold again. Alternate arms, and feel free to bellow.

For core strength, use... the side reach

A twist on the classic hanging leg raise. Hanging from the bar, bring both feet up to one side, touching the bar with one foot. Repeat on the other side. Once you've mastered this, hook your raised leg over a tree branch and practise climbing up.



Use mind tricks like

Obi-Wan Kenobi

• The force? Unnecessary. The best persuasive techniques are available to you whatever your midi-chlorian count



Expect the best

"Studies have shown that we can change people's behaviour by altering our expectations of them," says Philip Hesketh, author of Persuade: Using The Seven Drivers Of Motivation To Master Influence And Persuasion. "Behave like you expect to be liked. Don't be arrogant, but assume people are going to do what you want them to do."

Focus on similarity

"Start telling people what you like about them," says Hesketh. "Catch people doing something right and give them a word of encouragement and thanks. And when you meet new people, mention something you have in common. Perceived similarity goes a long way to changing 'no' to 'yes'."

Present it like a choice

"A Western Illinois University study involving 22,000 people found that including the phrase 'But you are free to...' in a request *doubled* the rate of success," says Hesketh. "In effect, you're not threatening the other person's right to say no." Think, "These aren't the droids you're looking for... but ultimately it's your decision."

Train your grip like

Princess Leia

• Using the Force might look cool, but it's more useful to be able to emulate Leia's hands-on strangulation of Jabba. Gold bikini optional



Do towel curls

Yes, it's OK to take your towel on to the gym floor.
Loop it through the handle of a kettlebell, then do your curls while holding both ends to train your grip and arms together.

Use the newspaper crunch



It's a favourite of Brooks Kubik, inventor of Dinosaur

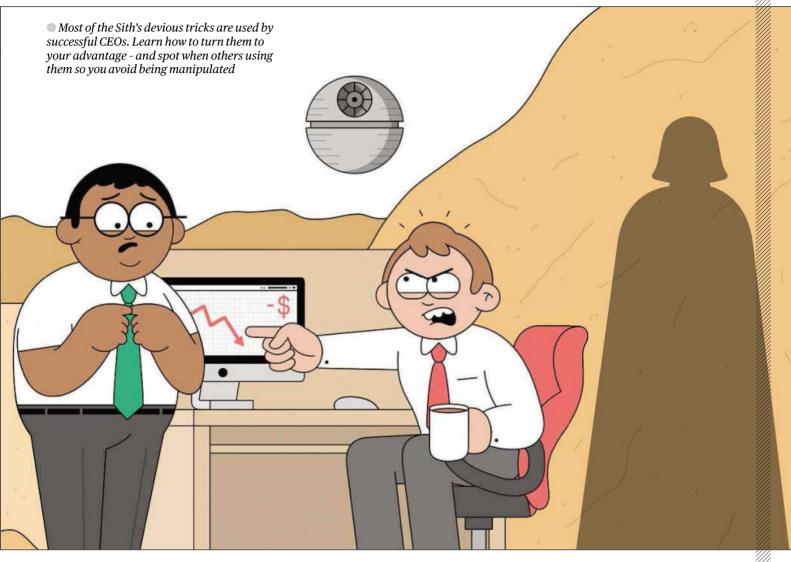
Training - a variation of strongman training focused on functional strength. When you've finished with your free newspaper, take a sheet or two and ball them up in one hand, as tightly as possible. You'll train more muscles than you'd hit with handgrippers.

Train your pull

If your gym has battle ropes, loop them through a sandbag (or get a friend to grab the other end) and pull it towards you. Doing two sets of 20m pulls as a finisher will give you Huttchoking strength.



Unleash your Dark Side... and get more done



Get people to do your bidding with... reciprocity

If you do someone else a favour, they'll feel obliged to repay the debt. In itself, this isn't a bad thing - it's what society is built on. The problem is that manipulators can exploit this tendency to their advantage. Want a favour from someone in the afternoon? Make them a cup of tea at 11am.

Avoid it It's not as simple as turning down favours or gifts - according to psychologist Robert Cialdini, author of Influence: The Psychology Of Persuasion, that's likely to result in "public disapproval". Instead, reevaluate the intentions of the giver. If you feel that you're being tricked, says Cialdini, redefine the initial "favour" so you don't feel the need to respond.

Make people follow you with... cognitive dissonance

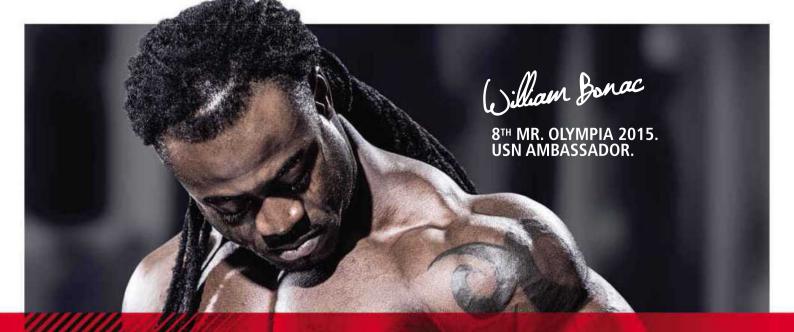
Convince someone to commit to an idea or goal (preferably in writing), and they're more likely to modify their behaviour to stick to it rather than go through the mental anguish of changing their self-image. Want a pay increase? First get your boss to agree that you're a valued worker, then hit him with the request.

Avoid if You can't just switch off consistency, which is a helpful neural shortcut. But you can look out for situations where people are using it to manipulate you - for instance, when a charity mugger gets you to verbally commit to being a nice person before hitting you in the direct debit. When you know it's a trick, it's easier to say no.

Get your own way with... authority

You don't need a helmet, but a suit might help. According to Cialdini, countless studies have shown that men in suits or lab coats are likely to be obeyed even when they don't have any obvious qualifications for the task at hand. Don't dress for the job you want; dress for the people you want to boss around.

Avoid it Ask yourself, says Cialdini, whether the person giving the orders is qualified to give them. Even if they are, it's reasonable to query whether they have your best interests at heart. You won't always be able to disobey superiors, but avoid taking orders from people who don't know what they're doing - or who've really embraced the Dark Side.



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Veg out all day long

Struggling to hit your five-a-day? These simple but delicious spiraliser recipes have you covered

Energy waffles

Ingredients

1 sweet potato / 1tsp cinnamon / 1tsp coconut oil / 1tbsp natural yogurt / Drizzle of honey / Handful of blueberries

To make

Spiralise the sweet potato and mix with the cinnamon and coconut oil. Spread the mixture evenly in a waffle maker or lidded grill and cook until crisp. Serve with blueberries, yogurt and honey to supercharge your morning.



For lunch

Slimming noodle salad

Ingredients

1 cucumber / 40g mozzarella, shredded / 2tsp extra virgin olive oil / Handful of baby plum tomatoes, halved / Handful of black olives, sliced / Fresh basil leaves

To make

Create a carb-free feast by simply mixing the spiralised cucumber in a bowl with the mozzarella, olive oil, tomatoes and olives. Serve garnished with the basil.

vitamin C



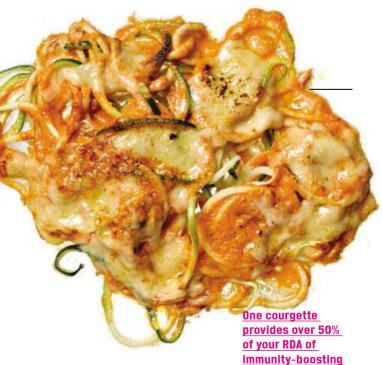
Bulk-up pasta bake

Ingredients

1 courgette / 2 tomatoes / 1 garlic clove / ½ an onion / 1tbsp olive oil / 1tsp Worcestershire sauce / 50g cheddar, grated

To make

Spiralise the courgette and place it in a baking dish. Blend the garlic, tomatoes, onion, olive oil and Worcestershire sauce in a food processor and spread over the courgette noodles, then sprinkle the protein-rich cheddar evenly over the top. Bake at 160°C/gas 3 for 30 minutes or until the cheese is browned.





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VANILLA AND CHOCOLATE









It might just be the ultimate manly comfort food: hearty, spicy, filling - and extremely simple to prepare. But with a few effortless upgrades, chilli can also become a valuable weapon in the war on fat. The recipe here was provided by Michelin-starred chef Adam Gray (adamgraychef.co.uk) and swaps beef mince for leaner lamb, while replacing white rice with brown basmati to help keep your blood sugar levels steady and avoid flab storage. Meanwhile, the capsaicin in the chillies helps to boost your metabolism, allowing your body to burn more calories. Getting ripped never tasted so good.

Chef says 'Skip natural yogurt and make the Greek variety your go-to chilli condiment. It contains four times the protein but less than a third of the calories.'

Ingredients (serves 2)

500g lamb mince / 4tbsp rapeseed oil / 4 large shallots, finely chopped / 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped / 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped / 2tsp smoked paprika / 3tbsp tomato purée / 400g canned chopped tomatoes / 150ml beef stock / 1tbsp fresh coriander, finely chopped / 1 bay leaf / 400g canned kidney beans, drained and rinsed / Salt and pepper to taste / 150g brown basmati rice

To make

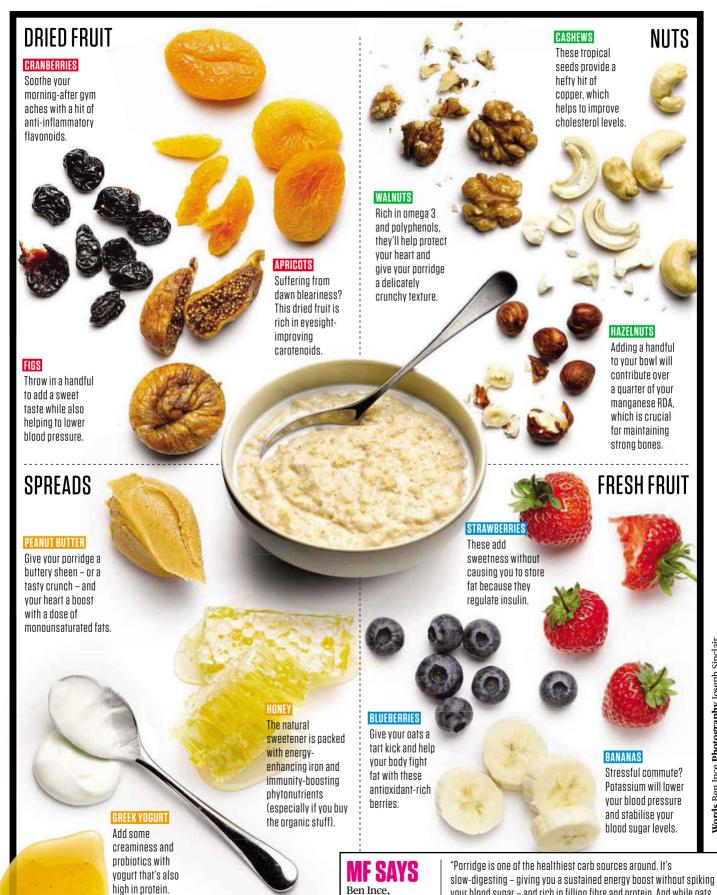
- Heat half the rapeseed oil in a large saucepan. Add the garlic, chilli and shallots and cook. Meanwhile, brown the mince in a separate pan over a moderate heat in the remaining oil.
- Add the mince and paprika to the shallots mixture and cook for a further five minutes.
- Add the tomatoes and leave to reduce on a medium heat for five more minutes.
- Add the beef stock and bay leaf and stir in the tomato purée, bring the mixture to the boil and leave it to simmer.
- Once the sauce is beginning to thicken, add the kidney beans and cook for a further ten minutes.
- Season with salt and pepper and add the coriander leaves.
- Cook the rice according to the instructions on the packet and serve with the chilli.



Cyclist co.uk
The Road Bike Site

POWER PORTIGE Supercharge your winter breakfast with these delicious wholefoods

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Fuel editor

Words Ben Ince Photography Joseph Sinclair

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With the MF guide to the 19 best (and worst) winter eats

'Tis the season of decadent food and drink - and well-earned too. But there are plenty of delicious festive treats that will actually help rather than hinder your fitness goals. Your tastiest - and healthiest - ever cheat month starts here



Words Ben Ince, Joel Snape, Joe Madden Photography Joseph Sinclair Illustrations Joe Wilson



DOUBLE UP ON PORK

0000

Blanket your pigs using quality meats for surprisingly healthy seasonal snacks

Bacon-wrapped sausages - or pigs in blankets - are the ultimate muscle-building snack, providing heroic quantities of protein. So why do they get such a bad rap? Because, like most processed meat, they can come with unpleasant extras - which is why if you want to get the most out of this manliest of canapés, quality ingredients are key.

KNOW YOUR SAUSAGE

The legal minimum meat requirement for a pork sausage in the UK is just 42%, and for other sausages it drops as low as 30%. So what else goes into our bangers? An unappetising mixture of bulking and binding agents such as rusk, water and polyphosphates, as well as a host of shelf life-extending agents including sulphites, preservatives and nitrates. Yum.

Unsurprisingly, none of the above adds any nutritional value, while some studies have suggested that they could even be a factor in the link between processed meat and cancer. Plus the less meat you have, the lower the levels of key nutrients such as muscle-building protein and manganese each sausage will provide.

On the plus side, high street and specialist brands are increasingly offering sausages with a higher percentage of meat to appease health-savvy consumers.

AVOID BACON JARGON

If sausage selection is fairly simple - high pork percentage plus organic ingredients equals winner - picking the right bacon involves a bit of lingo decoding.

First up is the difference between dry- and wet-cured. The former option involves rubbing the meat with salt and flavourings, which gives it a richer taste and a drier finish. Wet-cured is immersed in or even injected with brine - a salt and water solution - which is absorbed faster into the meat to help bulk it out. The result is bacon that shrivels in your frying pan while ejecting a nasty gooey white substance. Always opt for dry.

The next step is to pick a cut: streaky, middle or back. Streaky bacon is taken from the pig's belly and has a higher fat-to-meat ratio, while back is one of the leanest cuts and middle is halfway between the two. Chefs opt for streaky because it has the best flavour, but to keep calories down, back is better.

The final choice is smoked or unsmoked. There's little if any nutritional difference between them. The smoked variety tends to have a stronger flavour, so it's down to personal preference. If you're happy to spend a little extra, go for Abel & Cole's 95% organic pork cocktail sausages (abelandcole.co.uk), which come from pigs raised on organic, GM-free feed. For a cheaper, more widely available and only slightly lower-quality option, go with Sainsbury's 97% Pork Cocktail Sausages.

DIY pigs in blankets

Preheat your oven to 200°C/gas 6. Lay your rashers on a chopping board, then stretch and flatten them out with the back of a knife. Cut each strip in half, then wrap each half around a miniature sausage, using a cocktail stick to hold it together. Place in a tray and roast for 15 minutes until golden and cooked through, turning every few minutes.



Cheap sausage rolls

"Processed pork products are not the healthiest foods, but cheap sausage rolls bring a lot of extra nastiness," says nutritionist Jo Travers. "The meat is cheap and filled with stuff that isn't meat, plus salt and trans fat, which are linked to high blood pressure, bowel cancer and heart disease. Then there's the pastry, which is full of saturated fat and preservatives to give it a longer shelf life. Bad times all round."

EAT BETTER **CHOCOLATE**

This Christmas, put down the Quality Street and indulge like a grown-up, says MF associate editor Joel Snape

Yes, Christmas is a time to enjoy the simpler things in life. Yes, chocolate (in moderation) can be good for you. No, you shouldn't be hoovering up an oildrumsized box of miniature Twixes and passing out on the couch this Christmas. Like waking up at 5am or crying because you didn't get the present you wanted, it's fine when you're a kid, but embarrassing when you're a grown-up - and besides, there are better ways to do things.

First, the brown stuff's much-touted heart-health benefits largely come from cocoa solids, which are prevalent in darker chocs but less so in the milk variety - with the minimum EU cocoa

requirement being just 25% - and often nonexistent in white chocolate. Second: dark chocolate is not as moreish, and (when done

right) tastes better. The rule: 70% cocoa solids is good, but 80% is better (85% is sort of an acquired taste).

Try your damnedest to eat it a square at a time, and enjoy every nibble - think of it as like sipping a fine cognac rather than shotgunning a litre of WKD. Still too bitter for you? Offset the taste with a bit of salt - it's an old chef's trick. And remember that it's pretty high in caffeine, so don't go mad after 5pm.

This is the gentleman's way to enjoy chocolate. You are still, of course, allowed to get wildly excited about your presents and fall asleep in front of the obligatory Bond film.

Green & Black's organic 85% cocoa solids bar has vanilla to help soften the bitterness and tastes so good it'll win over even the most sceptical milk choc disciple (£2.19 for

100g, tesco.com).

is actually a legal requirement. But unfortunately for us Brits, a lot

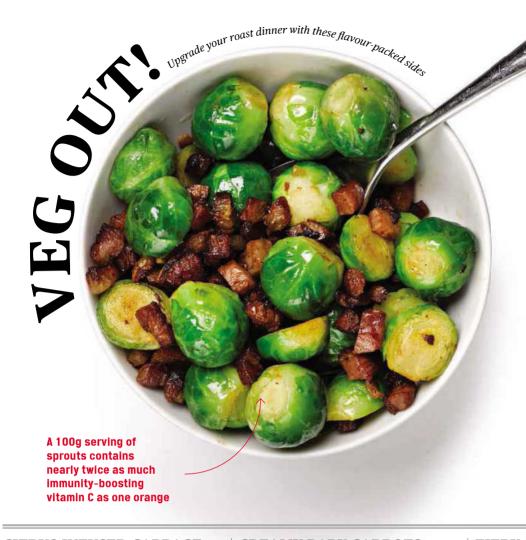
of the cheap milk chocolate produced on these shores is up to 5% unhealthy vegetable fat – which prompted some chocolatiers to campaign (unsuccessfully) to change the name to "vegelate".



Blanx Art Peru 77% Dark Organic,

Willie's Cacao Venezuelan Black, Ocado Divine 70% Dark





SENSATIONAL SPROUTS

Chef says "Brussels on their own are pretty bland and can have a slightly mushy texture. The pancetta in this recipe gives them a salty, smoky edge and some much-needed crunch, while their spongy texture will ensure they really soak up the garlic" Chloe Madeley fitnessfondue.com

Ingredients (serves 2)

200g baby Brussels sprouts / 75g pancetta / 2 garlic cloves, crushed / 1tsp salted butter / Salt and pepper to season

To make

Heat the butter in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the garlic and pancetta. Put a pan of salted water on to boil. Cut off the hard ends of the sprouts, slice in half and boil for two minutes. Drain them, add to the frying pan and sauté for up to two minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

CITRUS-INFUSED CABBAGE

Ingredients (serves 2)

150g red cabbage, grated / 1/2 an apple, cubed / 250ml white wine vinegar / 1tbsp fresh thyme / 1tbsp butter / 1tbsp orange zest

Mix the cabbage and apple with the other ingredients. Place in a pan and simmer over a medium heat for one hour. karolgladki.com

CREAMY BABY CARROTS

Ingredients (serves 4)

2 bunches of baby carrots, washed / 1/4 bunch fresh tarragon leaves, roughly chopped / 1tbsp natural yogurt

To make

Add the carrots to a pan of boiling water. Simmer for three to four minutes until tender, then drain. Return the carrots to the pan and add the tarragon and vogurt. Mix thoroughly. adamgraychef.co.uk

FIERY GARLIC BROCCOLI

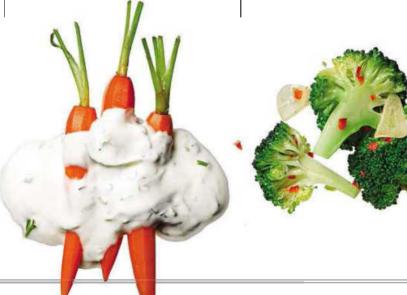
Ingredients (serves 3)

1 head of broccoli / 2 garlic cloves, sliced / 1 sweet chilli, chopped / 2tbsp olive oil / Salt and pepper, to taste

To make

Blanch the broccoli in boiling water for two to three minutes. Gently fry the garlic and chilli in the oil until slightly browned. Add the broccoli, salt and pepper and fry for two minutes. kxlife.co.uk







GAME-CHANGING POULTRY

Swap your traditional turkey for a classier bird and reap the nutritional rewards

PHEASANT

The taste Similar to chicken but richer

The benefit High in bone-strengthening magnesium **The recipe** Heat 50ml rapeseed oil in a large oven-proof pan on a hob. Place two pheasants in it and brown for three minutes breast-up, then another three minutes breast-down. Transfer the pan to an oven (preheated to 190°C/gas 5) for 30 minutes, turning the birds halfway through. Remove, cover and rest for five minutes.

The cost £5.50 per bird



OUAIL

The taste Delicate and tender The benefit Contains energy-enhancing iron

The recipe Preheat the oven to 260°C/gas 10. Take eight quails (they should be room temperature, not straight from the fridge), baste them with butter - Kerrygold grass-fed is a cheap and nutrient-rich option - and season lightly with salt. Spread them out evenly in a tin

and roast for 15 minutes. **The cost** £3 per bird



WOOD PIGEON

The taste Sweet and slightly nutty The benefit Packed with immunity-boosting zinc

The recipe Season four pigeons with thyme and then brown them in a pan in 2tbsp of rapeseed oil over a medium heat for five minutes, turning regularly. Baste the birds with 1tsp butter to keep moist, then roast for 20 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 220°C/gas 7. Leave to rest for ten minutes, then serve.

The cost £4.25 per bird



THE Scary truth about turkey...



roast in Britain in the 16th century but wasn't popular until the advent of mass refrigeration in the 20th raised has a big affect on the quality of their meat," says Travers. "What's more, rearing such a large number of birds in close proximity requires the routine use of antibiotics, which has led to an increase in antibiotic-resistant bacteria that could pose serious health risks to human beings. Finding an organic turkey might be tricky around Christmas time - not to mention

"What animals eat and how they're

expensive - but it's more than worth it. At the very least look for one with the Red Tractor logo, which guarantees a minimal welfare standard."

DRINK SMART(ish)

Downing copious amounts of alcohol is one of the most enjoyable things about Christmas - and it doesn't have to be (that) bad for you either. The key is to make or buy booze that contains fresh, minimally processed ingredients. Cheers to that.

HEALTHY HOME-MADE EGG NOG

Blend 450ml milk, three whisked eggs, 50g honey, 1tsp grated orange zest, 2tsp vanilla extract and a pinch of nutmeg. Adding a few shots of rum or bourbon: optional. foodforfitness.co.uk

DELICIOUSLY FRUITY DIY MULLED WINE

Chef says "The spices work wonderfully with the hot and fruity booze, while the addition of brandy gives it extra depth and plenty of kick" Tess Ward tessward.com

Ingredients

1 litre red wine / 250ml freshly pressed apple juice / 6 cloves / 4 cinnamon sticks / 2 oranges, sliced / Honey / Brandy

To make

Pour the apple juice into a saucepan with the spices and bring slowly to boil with the lid on. As soon as it starts to simmer, add the red wine and oranges and turn off the heat. Add honey and brandy to taste, then serve.





"A small 150ml glass contains around 11g of sugar, which is particularly high for booze and over a third of your RDA," says Travers. "The body releases a lot of insulin to stop sugar molecules from damaging your blood vessels. Instead of using them, it just stores them, which leads to weight gain, especially if you're ingesting it in liquid form without any fibre to slow down the digestion process. And despite what you might have heard, the orange juice in Buck's Fizz doesn't count towards your five a day, so don't kid yourself!" For more from Jo Travers visit theharleystreetnutritionist.co.uk





TEST YOURSELF



WILL YOUR WAISTLINE SURVIVE CHRISTMAS?

Run through this hyper-realistic simulation of a typical Christmas Day to discover how well you'll avoid Yuletide temptations and stick to the good habits you've maintained all year...

1 Hooray - it's Christmas morning! What time is it acceptable to start drinking?

- **A)** From the moment you wake to the moment you wrestle Uncle Dave into the Christmas tree.
- B) 7.23pm-7.42pm (one half-finished sherry).
- C) Alcohol is for weak-willed sewerdwellers and the pitifully uncool.

2 What exercise, if any, will you be doing today?

- A) Repeating this circuit until collapse: sofa to fridge to biscuit tin to wine rack to sofa.
- **B)** Your mum's banned you from exercising today, so you're reduced to repeatedly lifting nephews and nieces above your head under the pretence of being a top "funcle".
- C) As soon as possible, you'll be running as many miles as it takes until you *finally* come across a gym that's open. What is up with all these slackers today?!

3 You're sipping from a steaming mug. What's in it?

- A) Two sticks of butter, three miniatures of Baileys and a melted-down box of Milk Tray.
- **B)** Hot skimmed water with a nettle leaf in it.
- **C)** Two dozen egg whites and enough creatine to turn a toddler into a teenager.

4 Woo-hoo, it's Christmas dinner time. What meat are you having?

- **A)** A 20kg turkey stuffed with a 15kg chicken stuffed with two dozen veal sausages encasing a whole lobster.
- **B)** A delicious turkale a turkey made of moulded kale. You simply *cannot* tell the difference!
- C) Eleven tins of tuna slathered in XXXXXL Robo-Gladiator Monster-Gainz protein shake.

5 You're sitting with the family watching TV, and your dad is scrolling through the available options. What do you holler out for?

- A) "Let's watch Nigella's Merry Coronarymas!"
- B) "Let's watch Jamie Tuts At Your Lifestyle, You Slovenly Oaf!"
- C) "Let's watch the Insanity Workout infomercial!"

RESULTS

Mostly As

Hey, it's Christmas, so everyone's entitled to go a little crazy - but you might want to rein it in a touch if you don't want to spend Boxing Day with weird tingly pains in your left arm.

Mostly Bs

Yes, yes, very sensible, +50 healthy points to you. Just have one sneaky chocolate liqueur though, yeah? Go on. Go oooonnnn.

Mostly Cs

Unless you're an Olympian, black-ops commando or circus strongman, you *might* want to unclench a touch. Come on, it's *Christmas*! What would Jesus/Santa/Noddy Holder do?

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Nutritionist Drew Price investigates the state of food on high street Britain to find out what we're actually eating. This issue...

Curry: the good, the bad and the very, very ugly

A lot has changed since Saik Deen Mohamed opened the first Indian restaurant in England back in 1809 next to London's Hyde Park. The Hindostanee Dinner and Hookah Smoking Club ultimately spawned a £3.5 billion-a-year industry consisting of some 10,000 restaurants - some amazing, some extremely bad.

And although there's been a rise in authentic styles and supposedly healthier options recently, most restaurants still serve the thick, buttery, bastardised "curry" born of our typically British desire to drown all our meat in gravy. These dishes, as the manager of my local curry house explained to me over a pint of Cobra, bear little resemblance to traditional Indian cuisine. What's more, menus tend to feature a huge array of options - a sign that the ingredients are unlikely to be especially fresh.

The fat of the matter

Anything that tastes as good as a curry can't be good for you, right? Well, the news isn't all bad. Most dishes feature plenty of healthy spices and a decent amount of veg in the gravy base. The phytonutrients in both offer a range of

benefits, from antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds to chemicals that can aid fat metabolism.

Unfortunately, many of the flavour compounds in these spices are fat-soluble: in other words, to have an effect they have to be cooked in fat. This means chefs tend to use a lot of it. mostly in the form of ghee, a type of clarified butter

that's around 62% saturated fat. And while current research suggests that most types of fat (including saturated) aren't as bad for you as previously thought, it's still much more calorific than protein or carbohydrate, and consuming large quantities will ramp up your calorie intake quicker than you can say chicken korma. A typical tikka masala contains

50g of fat and 800 calories - 50% more than a Big Mac.

Salt is another issue, and although nutritional attitudes to it have relaxed a little in recent years, it's worth remembering that at 3-5g per dish, a curry can contain way over half your 6g RDA, and that's before vou add salty breads, side dishes and chutneys.

So what are the healthiest

options? Ideally you should avoid gravybased meals and opt for equally delicious dry-cooked dishes such as chicken tikka or tandoori, as this is an easy way to cut out some of the fat - as well as the added sugar that sauces also contain.

Side issue

Often the main problem isn't on your plate, but next to it. At over 500 calories per portion, a naan is almost a meal's worth in itself, and two onion bhajis can contain as much as 500 calories and 30g of fat - nearly half your RDA. There's better news with rice - basmati is high in amylose, a slow-digesting starch that helps to control blood sugar levels - but a fat-drenched pilau can easily add another 480 calories. One option would be to choose a fibre-rich side such as chapati instead, which can also help reduce your overall carb intake by up to 40%.



our meat in gravy"

THINGS TO AVOID

1) A restaurant with a huge menu of items with nearidentical descriptions for each - everything is likely to be generic meat with sauce from a jar

Cream-based. bastardised Brit dishes such as butter chicken and tikka masala, which are almost always the unhealthiest

3 Naans, poppadoms and deep-fried starters - renlacing these with dry vegetable side dishes will hugely improve the nutritional value (and flavour) of your meal

4 Any restaurant with good service, pleasant interior décor or a decent wine list – according to New York food writer Priya Krishna, these things are to the detriment of the food

(5) Any restaurant crowing about how fiery its curries are or challenging you to eat the hottest



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Seriously tasty sprouts

Brussels are the festive vegetable most of us love to hate - according to a nationwide post-Christmas survey, more than 17 million of them ended up in the bin last year. Reduce the wastage this winter and harness the bone-strengthening vitamin K in your spare sprouts by following the genuinely delicious recipe below. The Belgians, we're certain, would approve.

smoothies

Ingredients

Small handful of Brussels sprouts / 1tsp crushed cloves / 1 pear / 300ml orange juice

Berry for your belly

No Christmas dinner would be complete without cranberry sauce, but your enjoyment of this tart red condiment shouldn't end with the Queen's speech. Add a dollop of sauce - plus a hefty slug of cranberry juice - to a smoothie for a big hit of anti-inflammatory phytonutrients, which will help settle your stomach after an excess of booze.

Bought too much Christmas food? Use your leftovers to make these rejuvenating morning-after drinks from PT and nutritionist Scott Baptie

Ingredients

1tsp cranberry sauce / 300ml cranberry juice / 50g frozen strawberries / 50g frozen raspberries / 50g probiotic yogurt

Fruity painkiller

Satsumas are a classic stocking filler - something has to balance out the chocolate coins, right? - but their festive credentials don't end there. Take this citrus-infused smoothie, which features high levels of vitamin C to reinforce your immune system against the winter weather (not to mention the inevitable battering it'll receive during the Christmas party season).

Ingredients

1 satsuma /½ a banana / 1tsp honey / 400ml milk

Words Ben Ince Photography Joseph Sinclair For more from Scott Baptie visit foodforfitness.co.uk

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THE EXPERTS



THE ATHLETE **Jamie Nicholls. 22 Britain's best** snowboarder A YouTube sensation with a gymnast's physique, Nicholls often posts jaw-dropping videos showcasing his strength and agility, from backflip burpees to double rope climbs as well as tricks on rails and half pipes. He was an Olympic finalist in 2014, but his personal highlight is winning the prestigious Tokyo Burton Rail Days in 2011



THE COACH
Pat Sharples, 39
Ski coach to the pros
A veteran of winter
sports, Sharples has pro
experience from racing,
moguls, big-mountain
skiing and now coaching
new-school freestyle to
Great Britain's finest.



What are the benefits of cold-weather exercise?

Bombing down a mountain at 100km/h has its obvious pleasures but any sort of cold-weather activity brings numerous fitness benefits. A recent Finnish study found that exercising in nature leads to greater emotional wellbeing and better sleep than exercising indoors, while increasing your exposure to sunlight via the intense mountain sun can help fend off seasonal affective disorder (SAD), a type of depression whose symptoms are more pronounced during the winter. Other studies have shown that it increases people's appetite to exercise and lowers levels of the fat-storing stress hormone cortisol compared with indoor activity.

2 Isn't it bloody expensive?

It can be a big commitment if you've never done it before, and your body

"The airfare shouldn't bankrupt you – more than a third of the world's resorts are in the Alps"

can feel the costs as much as your bank balance. A four-year Californian study revealed the importance of experience: 49% of injured snowboarders and 18% of skiers were beginners - so get the most out of your trip by preparing.

The safest and most economical way to do that is to visit one of the UK's 70 indoor and outdoor ski slope centres first - Nicholls likes The Snow Centre in Hemel Hempstead. And when you go in search of the real thing, the airfare shouldn't bankrupt you - more than a third of the world's resorts are in the Alps.

"Chamonix in France is challenging but provides the best runs for competent skiers, while Saas-Fee in Switzerland is like a picture postcard with amazing parks for freestyle," says Sharples. Glaciers usually offer snow that's fresher and easier to float on and carve up. They're usually at a high altitude (up to 3,000m), though, so you need to be wary of altitude sickness, especially if you indulge in après-ski hospitality, because dehydration and nausea can exacerbate the symptoms.

What should I eat in the mountains?

A fat- and cholesterol-laden smorgasbord is OK if you're herding mountain cattle



Do I need 4 to be fit?

There's a reason your insurance premium leaps up when you tick the "mountain sports" box, and it's not because of avalanches. The risk of injury isn't huge - figures show there are seven snowboarding injuries per 1,000 visits, for example - but just exercising the week before your trip will improve your odds of enjoying rather than fearing your first day on the snow. Last-minute workouts don't have to be strenuous - even pros like Sharples simply rotate 45-minute sessions of swimming, rowing and cycling at a consistent pace. Getting your heart, lungs and muscles used to maintaining an even tempo in the gym or pool before you head for the slopes is a huge help.

"Almost every injury I've ever seen on the mountain happens when someone's pushing past their limits and out of their comfort zone," says Sharples. Training apps or heart rate monitors will give you a clearer idea if you're overexerting yourself: if your heart rate is still over 80% of your max after a good breather, take some time before throwing yourself into another pulsating run. And wear a helmet - it cuts the rate of injury from collisions by a third.

As for the pros, the image of snowboarding as a sport for relentless hedonists is long gone. Nicholls, a

teetotaller, is a disciplined athlete dedicated to gym training. "You have to be really strong at lifting your own bodyweight," he says. "You have to do 40 pull-ups no problem. You need to do muscle-ups. I'm actually working up to one-arm pull-ups at the moment."

🔼 Is it better to be too hot or too cold?

The colder it is, the more aggressive your warm-up should be - that goes for what you should wear when training at altitude or simply running at your local park when the mercury is dipping towards zero. "On the mountain, where it can go from really hot to really cold in a heartbeat, it's better to overdress with multiple layers," says Sharples. Save your cold comforts for your morning shower instead. Research from the University of Hull found exposure to cold water can boost circulation and wash away stress.

To keep warm, start with a base layer of synthetic material or a wool-synthetic blend, which wicks moisture away from the body. Avoid cotton because it can get damp from sweat and draw heat away. Wear a middle layer of fleece or wool to act as insulation, and a breathable outer shell made of wind- and water-resistant material with adjustable mesh vents in case you start to cook. Look for wool-synthetic blend socks and synthetic glove liners to keep the frost from biting your extremities. →





Photography British Ski & Snowboard, iStock

always have a protein bar to hand if I know it'll be a while until my next proper

sweat and exhaling water vapour.

but most people wouldn't burn off what they put in - despite all the mental energy spent trying to execute the perfect snowplough. It's not uncommon to return home fatter than when you started. An easy safety net is to use a wrist-strapped heart rate monitor to track how many calories you actually burn off - challenge yourself (and your

meal." Sharples recommends carrying water to reduce the risk of altitude sickness because, although you won't feel thirsty, you need to keep hydrated in the cold to replace liquids lost through

mates) to make sure your expenditure is

high enough to keep the ski belly at bay.

And pack healthy, energy-rich snacks. "Without fail I'll pack nuts, and especially cashews, in my pocket when I'm on the go," says Nicholls. "And I'll



Do I *really* **need to** warm up though?

The truth: nobody but the pros warms up. But you'd do it for a week-night five-a-side match - and you'd definitely do it if that football match cost you over a grand. The key, both Nicholls and Sharples stress, is to make yourself robust. "I work on my glutes, hamstrings and quads with single-leg exercises, squats and Romanian deadlifts," Nicholls says. "The minute I let my muscles go soft I'll be more vulnerable on the mountain." Preparation can make the difference between loving your ski trip and spending most of it nursing your aching body.

"Before leaving my room I spend a few minutes warming up, starting with a foam roller or hockey ball to massage knots out of my legs," Nicholls says. This encourages blood flow to your muscles, helping them feel fresh after days on the slopes. "At the top of the mountain I do exercises to activate my glutes. They're so important for any sport when you're travelling downhill. They act as the brakes and protect your knees. If they're not working properly you're vulnerable."

Nicholls does lunges, squats and, straight-leg crab walks using a mini band to increase the resistance, then finishes with hopping drills to get all the joints and muscles firing. "I do it at the top of the lift and look really stupid, but it would be more stupid to do nothing." Some press-ups, lunges and burpees would suffice, and any mild embarrassment you might feel is preferable to having your leg in plaster after a first-run fail.

How about a hot sauna – is that any good for me?

Making the most of your ski trip or maximising the benefits of a winter run is as much about what you do after the activity as during it. A hot sauna is the

"On the mountain I exercise to activate my glutes. They're so important when you're travelling downhill"

best place to start. Austrian research suggests it helps fight the risk of catching a cold, and according to a Finnish study it alters your heart rate and blood flow to prevent your body overheating. The research showed it can even lower your risk of fatal heart problems.

The pros moved on from ice baths long ago - Nicholls and several of his GB team-mates replaced them with a device called Compex Sports 8.0. This £700 contraption stimulates your muscle fibres electronically using what look like large, bulbous nicotine patches that you slap on the target area to help the muscles relax or keep them active when injury restricts exercise.

If you'd rather spend your money on upgrading to business class, alternating between a few minutes in a hot sauna and jumping briefly into a cold pool will help you recover. It might make you shriek like a eunuch but you'll sleep like a baby afterwards. "Once you get over the shock your muscles feel refreshed and your body relaxed," says Nicholls - and it's a darn sight less painful than sticking a mini-Taser to your skin.

Follow GB Park and Pipe on Twitter @GBParkandPipe and Facebook or visit teambss.org.uk to see them in action

Cold comforts

What to pack when exercising in freezing conditions



Warm up your hamstrings and glutes – which act as a brake when you're going downhill – by wrapping one of these around your knees and sidestepping.



2 Hockey ball

Use it to massage knots out of glutes, legs and back – it's easier to pack than a foam roller.



3 Smartphonecompatible gloves

You won't have to take them off to track crucial workout data (and skip ropey songs you forgot you had), reducing the risk of losing them and contracting frostbite.



4 Smartphone and tracking app

Check stats and stay on top of calories with an app such as Skitracks.



5 Hydration bladder

Sip water on your way up the mountain to reduce the risk of altitude sickness, dehydration and anxiety.



6 Snacks

Pack Snickers, nuts or dried fruit for a quick energy hit or emergency.

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Decline press-ups
and glute bridges
on a gym ball elicit
more core activation
than traditional abs
moves, according to
a study in the Journal
Of Orthopaedic Sports
Physical Therapy



The gym ball was originally designed in Italy in the 1960s as a toy by Aquilino Cosani, the man who invented the space hopper

Get unstable, get lean

Fat-burning gym ball moves you should be doing, but aren't

You can tell that colleague who insists on sitting smugly on a big bouncy ball "for his back" that he's wasting his time: studies have shown that it's no better - and possibly worse - for posture than using an ergonomic chair. He'd be better off using the gym ball for its intended purpose. One reason this bit of kit is sometimes known as a Swiss ball is that therapists in Basel developed its use as a tool for back rehab, because sitting, leaning or kneeling against it adds instability to an exercise. And that means you engage your deep core muscles hard to keep your balance.

"This added dimension will improve your core stability - crucial for a well supported pain-free spine," says coach Fred Westcott (interfyt.com), who created this circuit using moves that add awkward resistance to challenge your

whole body. "You'll burn extra calories to fight instability and avoid falling flat on your face."

HOW IT WORKS

"The workout alternates periods of effort and rest, systematically working your shoulders, chest, legs and core," says Westcott. "This interval method fries calories fast, but you need to push yourself to hit as many reps as you can with good form."

DIRECTIONS

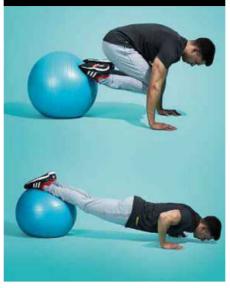
Do exercises 1 to 5 for 30 seconds each, resting 30 seconds between them. "If you're a beginner, aim for a ratio of 20sec/40sec, while the more advanced can push it to 40/20," says Westcott. Repeat four times. Do exercise 6 as a core-blasting finisher, aiming for five rotations each way, to take you to a total time of 22 minutes.



OVERHEAD SOUAT Hold the ball with straight arms and retract your shoulder blades to keep it directly overhead. Keep your chest and head up as you lower into a squat, keeping your weight on your



If the press-ups are killing you, just do the knee tucks



JACKKNIFE PRESS-UP Get into a press-up position with your feet on top of the ball. Keeping your hips still, roll the ball towards your hands by bending your legs. Return to the start and then do a press-up.

GLUTE BRIDGE Lie on the floor with your heels on the gym ball. Drive your hips up, rolling the ball towards you, until your body is in a straight line from your



V-SIT Lie on your back, holding the ball in both hands just off the floor. Contract your abs muscles to bring the ball above you and pass it to your feet. Lower the ball with your feet until it's just off the floor, then reverse the move.

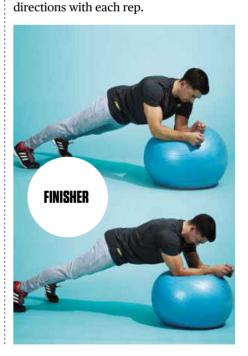


A great functional drill for full-body mobility



LUNGE WITH WOODCHOP Start holding the ball low to your left side with straight arms. Step your right foot forwards into a deep lunge, rotating your core to bring the ball across and up to your other side, then reverse the move. Complete at least three reps on one side, then switch to the other.

STIR THE POT With your feet fairly wide apart, rest your elbows on top of the ball. Engage your core to keep your body stable and slowly make small circles with your hands, as if stirring a pot. Alternate



Sam Rider, fitness editor

If this feels easy, you're doing it wrong. Keep the form strict and the reps slow, and your abs should be on fire by round two. Don't let the ball stray forward in the overhead squat and, when you're stirring the pot, slow is the watchword. Think risotto, not pancake batter.

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You Tube /MuscleFoodUK

The 5 time-wasters you meet in every gym

SAND HOW TO DEAL

Your workout should be like the body you're aiming to get lean, efficient and stripped of anything unnecessary. Keep it under an hour by dodging the gym's worst irritations

CAPTAIN FORM-CHECK Yes, form is important. And yes, getting the right grip-width when you bench (or foot-angle when you squat) can be the difference between a poor session and a PB. But that doesn't mean every self-taught internet PT can bellow "Elbows up!" and "Drive drive drive!" at vou like he's a submarine commander. It's fine if you ask their advice - less so if they offer it unsolicited. How to deal with him The long way: reassure yourself that you're doing it right by posting a form-check video at reddit.com/r/weightroom. The short way: headphones,

no eye contact.

JOHNNY PB "Oh, you just squatted bodyweight? Nice work! Yeah, last week I got 100kg. For five reps. In socks." There's a man in every gym who has done better than you at any given move, under worse conditions, at a time you happened not to be around. Almost like magic. It's OK to not like him very much, and it is very OK to not want to listen to him. How to deal with him Remind him that, in the words of judo creator Jigoro Kano, it is not important to be better than someone else, but to be better than yesterday. (Then ask him what he benches and tell him you can do 10kg more than that. Narrow grip.)



PROFESSOR BRO-SCIENCE

To be fair, academic studies do often lag behind real-world experience when it comes to gym gains: the muscle-building value of chasing the "pump", for instance, has only recently been validated by studies, despite the fact that Arnie was extolling its virtues three decades ago. But that man telling you that if you aren't scoffing a tub of waxy maize during your post-workout window you're going to lose all your gains? That man, my friend, is not Arnie.

How to deal with him Talk to him in his own language. "Sorry, bro - I only do moves that I've seen referenced in double-blind peer-reviewed meta-studies.'

MR TRY-THIS Doing dumbbell presses

on the bench? Yeah, seated cable flyes'll hit the pecs better. Hitting up some 30/30 sprints on the bike? Listen, 20/40 is really where it's at for the lactate build-up. Whatever you do, there will be a man who tells you that doing something slightly different will get you where you're going faster. Ignore that man.

How to deal with him

Hit the gym with a plan, preferably written down: it'll keep you focused and, if you have to, you can wave it at interlopers. If necessary, assure them that you'll do their crazy bullshit next time you're at a loose end. The secret? This is never.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE **LORD THREE-MORE-SETS**

It's fine to ask to share equipment. Sometimes, it's OK for your new buddy to be reluctant - if they're sticking to short rests, say, or if they're a terrible person. What isn't cool is when you ask how many sets left and they say "three", then wander off for five minutes. Leaving their towel on the bar.

How to deal with him

There's no hard and fast rule, but if someone's resting for 60 seconds or more between sets and they've got at least two sets left, and you've offered to help swap the plates between sets... well, they can still say no. But they're basically worse than Lex Luthor and Loki combined.



WAKE A REAL MAN INSIDE YOU MALE TESTO

TESTOXEED[™]

HACK YOUR BODY AND MAINTAIN YOUR NATURAL TESTOSTERONE.

BEGINNING AROUND AGE 30 LEVEL OF TESTOSTERONE WHICH PLAY LARGE ROLE IN MALE SEXUALITY AND IMPACT SUCH FACTORS AS MUSCLE MASS, STRENGTH AND STAMINA STARTS TO DECLINE. TESTOXEED IS THE PERFECT COMBINATION OF ACTIVE INGREDIENTS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF NORMAL TESTOSTERONE LEVELS IN THE BLOOD [ZINC] AND THE REGULATION OF HORMONAL ACTIVITY (VIT. B6).











Fitter, leaner, stronger - is altitude training the ultimate performance enhancer? MF's Sam Rider climbs to 3,000m (indoors) to find out

WHAT IS IT?

Training at altitude was once reserved for the top 1% - elite, affluent sportsmen and women chasing performance perfection at alpine boot camps or in high-tech sports labs. Now it's more accessible, with centres across the country bringing the mountain conditions to the masses via hypoxic chambers, and claims that they're as useful for helping shift stubborn belly fat as they are for shaving milliseconds off your triathlon time.

THE METHOD

Formula Interval sprints + depleted oxygen = more red blood cells + more efficient use of energy

Each class is built around intervals called Intermittent Hypoxic Training (IHT) - basically high-intensity interval training (HIIT) and hill sprints, minus normal oxygen levels.

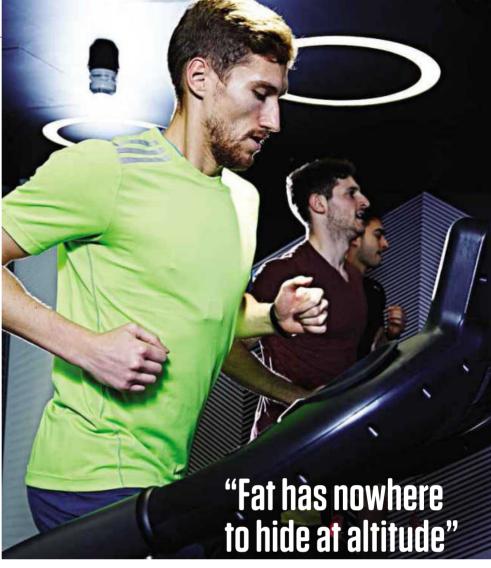
The main aim of altitude training is to make your muscles better at using oxygen by depriving them of it - something first recognised in 1968 at the Olympics, which took place in Mexico City 2,300m above sea level. Sprinters smashed world records in the thinner air, while long-distance runners laboured. At sea level, air is 20.9% oxygen; in Virgin Active's studio it's 15%, which is equivalent to training at just below 3,000m.

"When you cut your oxygen supply your body has to adapt to be more efficient," says Ellie Gilham of The Altitude Centre, who worked with VA to install the two chambers at the Walbrook gym in London. "Over time your red blood cells, muscle capillary volume and the amount of mitochondria - the powerhouses in cells that help your body turn oxygen to energy - will all increase."

It's like cutting back on the fuel in your car while upgrading the engine to go further and faster, and the benefits can be felt after just six sessions. A study from the Australian Institute of Sport has suggested that you can increase your red blood cell count by as much as 7% in just three weeks. In effect, it's a natural way to reap the performance-enhancing benefits of the banned hormone erythropoietin (EPO), the use of which has dragged pro cycling through the dirt.

The science is compelling, but in the short term I'm more concerned about how these 30-minute sessions will feel. "They're going to hurt more than normal," warns VA's instructor and elite triathlete Nick Beer, explaining less oxygen means a greater build-up of excruciating lactate in your muscles until you get better at clearing it.

Beer quickly adds that the pain is worth bearing for the time-saving, fat-burning benefits it can offer. "At altitude your heart and breathing rates increase, at rest



as well as during exercise, meaning more blood gets pumped around your body and muscles have to work harder," Beer says. This means a 30-minute session will feel like a 60-minute session and you'll burn double the calories during it - plus more afterwards.

THE TEST

How many sessions Six 30-minute classes in three weeks What MF measured Body composition before and after, calories burned and heart rate per session, number of times the pain threshold was breached

The air in the VA studio has a cool, artificial quality but there's no noticeable lack of oxygen at first. The 30-minute Apex Sprint session follows the format of a typical interval session on the treadmill and Wattbike. We're strapped up to Polar heart rate monitors and our percentage of maximum beats per minute flashes up on screen to make sure we're not lagging in any comfort zones.

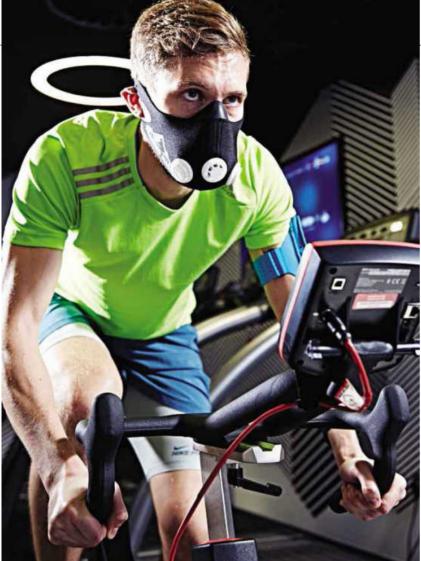
I soon realise it's hard to stay comfortable at altitude. Within two minutes at a gentle trot my ticker is thumping above 75% of maximum, proving that my cardiovascular system is having to work overtime to compensate for the lack of oxygen. Beer pushes us to crank up our speed for another minute to get above 80%, then gives the signal for a 30-second guts-out sprint to push into the red zone above 90% before reeling us back to a light canter.

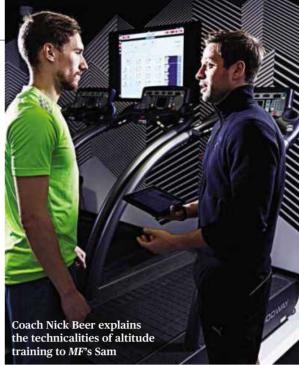
We repeat this format four times in total, looking to spike our heart rate higher with each effort. "The aim is to recover without slowing down," says Beer, which sounds like an impossible trick. "It's not how long you can keep your heart rate in the red zone, but how quickly you can get it to return to normal after bouts of high intensity." After a few weeks I should start to see my heart rate bounce back to normal more quickly, improving my speed of recovery for anything from football to circuit training.

By the end of the class I'm drenched in sweat, despite having only done four short sprints in less than half an hour. As soon as it's over, my workout data is in my email inbox ready to be scrutinised. In that brief spell I burned a sizeable 470 calories, equal to a large McDonald's fries or strawberry milkshake.

I take five more classes over the next three weeks, including a circuit-based session featuring weighted lunges and kettlebell swings at The Altitude Centre, but my hopes of getting in additional sessions outside the gym by wearing am "elevation" training mask (trainingmask.co.uk) are abandoned.

Photography Ben Knight







"They restrict airflow rather than changing the amount of oxygen you breathe," explains Gilham. "It will strengthen the intercostal muscles and your diaphragm to help you breathe deeper but you can do exactly the same thing by only breathing through your nose while exercising.

The other VA class is called Apex Strength and is based on hill sprints. You increase the incline on the treadmill up to a maximum 15% gradient and ratchet up the resistance on the Wattbike, leaving you to grind your legs over to fight the resistance. These strength classes are brutal. I burn roughly the same number of calories but spend far longer panting and spluttering in the maximum heart rate zone at above 90%. It feels more like a leg muscle-building workout than an endurance session.

In my final class, encouraged to give it everything, I feel the full effects of the lack of oxygen in the air. On the final steep sprint I can only manage shallow, panicked gasps of breath as searing hydrogen ions from the lactate flood my legs. When I eventually return to a standstill I notice that the altitude monitor reading is only 1,800m. Someone had left the door open earlier and it was taking too long to climb back to 3,000m, making me slightly suspicious that there might be a placebo effect going on. Even so, the stats suggest I've spent over three

minutes above 90%, something that would be difficult to sustain during my normal sea-level workouts.

THE VERDICT

MF's results +0.2kg (0.5%) muscle, -0.5kg (0.7% fat), max heart rate 179bpm (93% max), max calories burned 470

Pros data feedback, efficient workout Cons bound to class timetable, stuck indoors

Fat has nowhere to hide at altitude. In just three weeks and a total of only three hours I've lost half a kilo and my body fat has dropped almost a whole percentage point, while muscle mass has increased by 0.5%. The soreness in my hamstrings and inner thigh muscles after a strength class suggests I was building rather than eroding them and since then I've felt strong during five-a-side matches.

"If you don't do any exercise for six weeks you'll lose the short-term gains," says Beer, when I ask how long this invigorated feeling will last. "But you'll benefit from muscle memory, having pushed yourself to your limits."

The Wales rugby union team use a principle known as Live High Train Low (LHTL). You spend several hours a day at high altitude to get the physical

adaptations but train at lower altitudes, because you can't sustain the same intensity in the thinner air and could even de-train your body - something the Mexico City Olympic athletes found out the hard way. It's a reason why these VA sessions are short intervals rather than endurance runs, and highlights how you can best add the classes to your training.

"When training for a long-distance race you need to combine long runs to get the miles in your legs with tempo runs to find your pace and intervals and hill sprints for power," says Beer. These classes at altitude tick those two final boxes. "If you do them twice a week in the ten weeks leading up to race day, you'll be in the perfect condition to attack the course."

The only downside is that you can only reach altitudes of 3,000m in cramped airsealed vaults. But because you get double the training effect in half the time, doing your hill sprints and intervals at altitude frees up plenty of time for you to make more of your long runs or rides in the open, unadulterated air.

THE BREAKDOWN

Lose fat 🗸

Build muscle X

Boost endurance 🗸

Technique advice 🗸

No membership required 💢 Under 30min 🥒

For all fitness levels 🗸

Provides workout data 🗸

Replicable at home X Available nationwide

SCORE

THINK MORE ABOUT RECOVERY



Finding a whey protein that balances unsurpassed quality with a great taste and health considerations incorporated into the formulation isn't always easy.

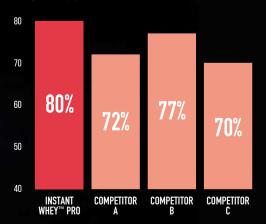
Instant Whey™ PRO delivers a high level of protein at 80% where the main ingredients include whey isolate which has an unchallenged reputation. This isolate incorporates native whey, which is made using a process that keeps far more of the important amino acids in place. This makes it perfect for aiding muscle recovery after strenuous exercise or gym workouts.

Furthermore, it includes 500 million spores of friendly bacteria per serving and DigeZyme® Enzyme complex.

THE FACTS

20 g PROTEIN | ONLY 97 CALORIES | ONLY 1.1 g FAT PER SERVING

PROTEIN CONTENT



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

| | MADE IN AN INFORMED-SPORT SITE? | FULL MONEY Back Guarantee |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| INSTANT WHEY™ PRO | YES | YES |
| COMPETITOR A | NO | NO |
| COMPETITOR B | NO | NO |
| COMPETITOR C | NO | NO |
| | | |

MANUFACTURED IN AN INFORMED-SPORT REGISTERED FACILITY.







This workout builds what Stolz calls "Mostability", the combination of mobility and stability you use to do everything from getting out of bed to crawling through a Tough Mudder trough. The moves get increasingly hard: if you can't manage the ones at the end, repeat the early moves until you've built the strength to see the whole thing through.

DIRECTIONS

Assume the position, then perform the moves in order, going directly from one to the next. Do three reps each side of each position, completing all your reps on one side before switching to the other. Too easy? Perform two more reps on each side.



Y-shape with your body.









From your press-up position, pivot on your left foot, rotating your hips and shoulders to the left as you drive your knee from right to left. Then bring your heel up behind you.

Forward reach
Stay in your press-up
position with hands
under your shoulders,
then lift your right
hand off the ground. Lower
your hips and drive your
right arm forward, then push
your hips upward and your
hand behind you, forming an
inverted V.









Get into a modified side plank with both feet on the ground and one hand on the floor. Rotate your hips to the right as you bring your right arm up in a T position, then to the left as you bring your hand underneath and across your body.







SPOTLIGHT ONSUPPS

Get a helping hand to achieve your goals with the effective nutrition boosters we've highlighted here



MUSCLE Genuine Since 1997

NORATEEN HEAVYWEIGHT II + Testosterone

Testosterone is the musclebuilding hormone, and Norateen Heavyweight II from LA Muscle packs in six active ingredients to enhance your levels naturally and safely. Expect increased strength and muscle growth when using this renowned supplement. www.lamuscle.com



DIRECT NUTRITION

ELITE CLA SOFTGEL CAPSULES

Conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) is one of the most popular sports nutrition supplements. Long associated with weight management, CLA is believed to aid reduction of body fat and promote lean muscle growth and definition. Elite CLA softgel capsules are easy to swallow and can be taken any time of the day or night. www.directnutrition.co.uk



NURISHMENT ACTIVE DRINKS

Specially formulated to help you "get back your spark" after sports or exercise, nutritionally enriched Nurishment Active is a low-fat milk drink containing 22 vitamins and minerals as well as 35g protein per bottle. Available in vanilla, strawberry and chocolate flavour from Sainsbury's and Boots.

www.nurishmentactive.co.uk







ELITE FAT METABOLISER CAPSULES +

Elite Fat Metabolisers combine herbs and stimulants (also known as thermogenics) to increase your body temperature slightly. Alongside a healthy, calorie-controlled diet, these may assist weight loss and help burn more calories during exercise. www.directnutrition.co.uk

FOOD SERIES



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There's nothing else like it!
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Forget the bench press - this is the definition of strength. And it's possible to attempt at your nearest jungle gym today - if you're made from strong enough stuff

1 YOU DON'T NEED TO LIFT

Gymnasts not only defy gravity, they use it - combined with their bodyweight - to build chiselled bodies befitting Greek gods. "You can build incredible strength and muscle working against just your own bodyweight," says European and Commonwealth gold-winning British gymnast Daniel Keatings. To get anywhere on the rings you need every upper-body muscle to be strong - even your forearms. "They help stabilise the elbow to keep your arm straight, which is crucial to score any points in competition."

2 IT'LL FIND YOUR WEAKNESSES

A gymnast's muscle isn't just for show. They need it to handle the incredible forces their bodies deal with, especially on the rings. "The cross puts a huge strain on your shoulders, biceps and pecs," says Keatings. "I've seen a coach who was a former gymnast rupture his biceps tendon doing it, trying to show off. When it snapped, the muscle bunched up to one end like he'd rolled his sleeve too high."

3 BEING STOCKY IS AN ADVANTAGE

The perfect shape is skinny legs, cannonball shoulders and a significant "wingspan" - in other words, wide lats. "The best two in the world," says Keatings, "are Brazil's Arthur Zanetti [pictured], who's only 5ft 2in [1.57m] but built like a tank and won gold on the rings at London 2012, and Greek gymnast Eleftherios Petrounias, who's not as built but is ripped and can hold one for an almost unthinkable 45 seconds. If you're tall and skinny with long levers you might struggle - stick to the high bar."

Use a false grip so your wrist rests on the ring

Tense pecs and biceps as you lower into position

Breathe, if you can

Contract EVERYTHING hard and count to three

4 IT REWARDS CONSISTENCY

"Dips give you the strength for it, but it requires faultless technique too - and you'd have to practise every day for probably a year," says Keatings. A good place to start is doing dip regressions: hold the top position of a dip for 30 seconds, then put stretch bands under your feet to reduce your weight as you lower into the cross.

WHAT IT TAKES

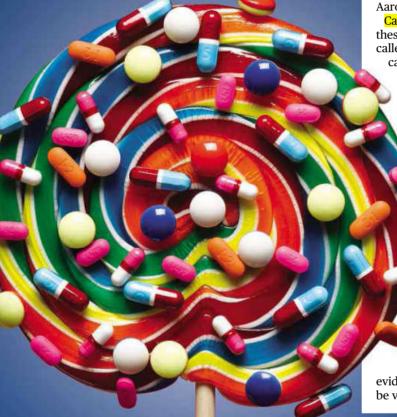
A year of training every day
A stocky upper body
Ideally, short levers (arms)
A high pain threshold
Difficulty rating 9/10

mags **Your Total Gym Guide** + 28-Day Fat Loss Manual

Make 2016 your best year ever with the legendary February issue of Men's Fitness

Out 16th December

Fat burners are meant to transform your body into a calorie-torching furnace - but do they deliver? MF separates the facts from the hype



WHICH ONES WORK?

Effective fat burners act like a hyperdrive for your metabolism. Pop a pill and your body's ability to burn calories kicks into warp speed. "They do three things: increase fat oxidation during rest and exercise, boost your body's ability to metabolise fat - convert it to energy - and produce heat in your body to hike up your energy expenditure, which is called thermogenesis,' savs sports nutritionist Aaron Deere (kxlife.co.uk). Caffeine delivers all of

these, while antioxidants called catechins in green tea can increase fat-burning conditions by 4.7%.

Research into the South American herb yerba mate, used to make tea, has shown it ticks the fat-burning boxes due to its high caffeine content.

WHICH DON'T?

"Some supps might have shown beneficial effects on animals or cells in a test tube, but that doesn't necessarily mean they translate to humans," says Deere. Manufacturers don't always have to provide rigorous evidence for their claims, so be vigilant. The natural amino

acid-derived carnitine and forskolin, which is produced by the Indian coleus plant, are both involved in fat oxidation but evidence for their benefits in supplement form is thin on the ground.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

Before you stock up on green teabags and whack on the kettle, it's important to realise you'd need to chug down a paddling pool's worth to get any noticeable benefits. Research into green tea indicates that you need at least 8.6g a day, which works out at a minimum of nine cups. Concentrated green tea extract comes in powder, capsule or pill form and is a far easier way to consume the fat-burning catechins.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Beware the caffeine jitters. "To increase energy expenditure you need a high daily dose of 8mg per kilogram of bodyweight," says Deere. For an 80kg man, that's a little over eight Starbucks short Americanos in a day. "But for those sensitive to caffeine it's been linked with anxiety, insomnia, an upset stomach and muscle tremors." Green tea's lower in caffeine, but that doesn't mean vou can have as much as you want - too much of it can also stunt the absorption of iron from food, which reduces energy production.

TURN UP THE HEAT

Fat burning alternatives to popping a pill



GO TO BED ON TIME

Chaotic sleeping habits disturb your body clock, spiking fatstoring hormones like cortisol. Being consistent with bedtimes curbs this, a US study found.



DRINK UP

Dehydration slows your metabolic rate. Staying topped up – with eight cups of water a day, according to a German study – boosts your rate by 30%.



WATCH COMEDY

Laughing pumps up your heart rate, helping burn up to 40 calories per ten minutes cackling a day, research at Vanderbilt University in the US found.

MF SAYS

Joel Snape, associate editor



"Do fat burners work? Yes, but so do lots of other things if you want to get lean – and if you're chugging NitroCut (or whatever) alongside fizzy pop and cupcakes, you'll hit a sticking point sooner or later. The best advice, as usual, is read the label and don't overdo it. Think of them like a secret weapon: something to break out after the progress you can make with sensible eating and training has stalled."



GO BERSERK

WITH REDWEILER

GREAT PRE-WORKOUT IN FIVE INCREDIBLE TASTES: ORANGE, RED PUNCH, LIME CRIME MINT, BLUEBERRY MADNESS, RAGING COLA.

UP TO **80** SERVINGS PER PACK.









Body Work

Build a V-shaped torso

Give the six-pack a rest and sculpt tailor-made muscle so you look your best for the party season

Winter is most definitely coming, and the shorter nights and plummeting temperature mean fewer opportunities

to bare your chest and a growing need to plot your route through the festive season. The conclusion? It's time to put the abs regime on hold and focus on limiting the damage when you indulge, as well as delivering a timemaximising workout that will broaden your shoulders, pack out your pecs and help you build the perfect V-shaped frame to hang your favourite suit on.

"If you're looking to add mass quickly, multi-angular tri-sets are a great way to build muscle," says fitness transformation specialist Rich Phillipps, this plan's creator. "Focusing on your back, shoulders, chest and arms will add the necessary width for that desirable V-shape, so you'll be ready to impress in time for December.'

Use these three tri-set workouts to add bulk to your upper body and fill out your tux in time for the office party. After that, what you do with the photocopier is on you.

Follow Rich Phillipps on Twitter @RichPhillipps and Instagram @TruestoryPT





Rich Phillipps is a trainer, founder of Roar Fitness and co-author of the MF MagBook 8 Week Body Plan

V-shaped torso is built on three training pillars: time under tension, high volume and maximum recruitment of muscle fibres. Tri-sets, where you do three exercises back to back with minimal rest, deliver on all these. "The variety of exercises, rep ranges and tempos hits your upperbody muscles from every angle," says Phillipps. The result will be a body fit to model for classical statues - or at least turn heads in black tie.

Follow these three workouts over a week, resting for at least a day between sessions. Our style guru's tips on p145 will help you ensure the cut of your suit flatters your physique. If you're worried the festive season is taking its toll on your exercise regime, use our recovery tips on p142 to come back stronger and healthier.

Workout 1 Chest & back

Pack out your pecs and lats with this high-volume session

DUMBBELL

Lie on a bench set at a 45° angle holding dumbbells at chest height. Powerfully press the dumbbells straight upwards. Gently touch them together, lower slowly, then repeat.





IMBBELL BENCH PRESS

Lie on a flat bench holding dumbbells with an overhand grip either side of your chest. Drive your feet hard into the floor to generate more power, and press the weights straight up. Lower them slowly back to the start position.

REPS 12 EACH SIDE TEMPO 2220

Lie on a flat bench holding light dumbbells to either side with your arms slightly bent. Bring the weights above your chest, keeping the bend in your arms and pressing them hard together, then lower to the start.



REPS 8 TEMPO 3010

Grasp a bar with an overhand grip so your palms are facing away from you and your hands are double shoulder-width apart. Contract your upper back muscles to help pull your sternum towards the bar. Then lower under control.



TRI-SETS **FXPI AINFD**

In these workouts you perform moves A. B and C back to back with minimal rest - aim for no more than 15 seconds between them. Because the tri-set starts with the hardest lift and moves on to easier ones, you're able to treble the training volume for every muscle you're targeting, forcing them to adapt to the high workload by growing bigger and stronger.

TEMPO EXPLAINED

Why time is your greatest weapon in building head-turning muscle

Seconds to How long to Seconds for How Inna to complete the pause at the the concentric pause at the bottom of the rep or lifting phase. end of the eccentric (lowering) - zern seconds X means move ren Here it's part of the lift in this case explosively. one second.

MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

To get off training plateaus

do... ECCENTRIC-ONLY REPS

Using a heavy weight, take four seconds to lower (get help to return to the start). "Without the elastic energy of full reps the muscles rely on their own energy, which equals big gains," says Phillipps. Note: it hurts, so use these sparingly.

For efficient growth do... TWITCH TEMPO

"Fast-twitch muscle fibres - shoulders, chest, triceps and hams - respond better to less time under tension at higher loads, so use 10XO." Phillipps says. "The back, biceps and quads are mostly slow-twitch, so use lighter loads at 4020."

To burn more fat do...

MORE TIME UNDER TENSION

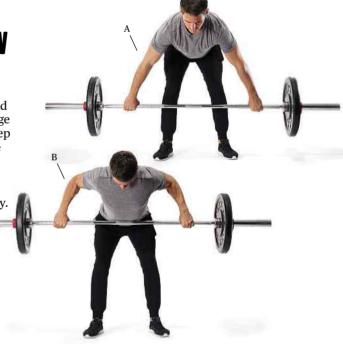
"A tempo of 4111 ratchets up the metabolic stress of a session, as well as lactic acid production," says Phillipps. This releases potent fat-blitzing growth hormone and keeps you burning more calories after the workout.

WIDE-GRIP BENT-OVER ROW

REPS 8 TEMPO 4010

Holding the bar with an overhand grip double shoulder-width apart, bend your knees a little and hinge forward from the hips. Keep your back slightly concave and your shoulder blades back throughout. Pull the weight up to your lower sternum, then lower slowly.

The wider your grip, the greater the V-shape effect



SINGLE-ARM ROW

REPS 12 EACH SIDE TEMPO 3010

Support your knee on the bench, planting the other leg wide for balance. Keep a natural arch in your back and your core braced. Grasp a dumbbell and, keeping your elbow tucked in, lift it to the side of your chest, then lower slowly. Complete all reps on one side, then switch to the other.







INCLINE SEATED CURL

REPS 6 TEMPO 4010

Lie on a bench set at a 45° angle holding dumbbells with your arms straight down by your sides, palms facing forwards. Curl the weights up to shoulder height. Squeeze your biceps hard, then lower the weights slowly.



REPS 12 TEMPO 2021

Lie chest-down on a bench set at a 45° angle, holding dumbbells with your arms hanging straight down and palms facing each other. Curl the weights slowly up towards your shoulders, then slowly lower them.





POST-PARTY RECOVERY

Repair the damage with breakfast and training suggestions from Myles Hopper, personal trainer and co-founder of Mindful Chef (mindfulchef.com)

SCENARIO A

Had a couple of drinks, scoffed a tray full of hors d'oeuvres

EAT... EGGS

Alcohol suppresses fat metabolism, making your body more likely to store it. Eggs are rich in protein, iron and other nutrients that help kick-start your fat-burning capabilities.

EXERCISE... WITH ROWING INTERVALS

High-intensity interval training is a guaranteed way to burn off the empty calories from that booze. Row flat-out for 20 seconds, followed by ten seconds of rest, and repeat eight times. Rest for two minutes and repeat. Bon voyage, beer belly.

SKULLCRUSHER

Lie on a flat bench holding light dumbbells straight above you. Keeping your elbows still, bend your arms to lower the weights to either side of your head. Pause, then press them back up to the start.





STANDING

REPS 12 TEMPO 2010

Stand holding dumbbells above your head with your upper arms close to your ears. Keeping your elbows still, bend your arms to lower the weights behind your head, then flex your triceps to raise the weights straight up again.

> Weights room crammed? Get the same benefit with triceps dips, narrow-grip press-ups and wide-grip press-ups

BENCH PRESS

REPS **6** TEMPO **4110**

Lie on a flat bench holding the bar with an overhand grip, hands slightly narrower than shoulder-width apart. Drive your feet hard into the floor and press the weights straight up powerfully, then lower them slowly back to the start.



SCENARIO B

Mixed bubbly and beers, then raided the snacks cupboard at home

DRINK... COCONUT WATER

Because alcohol acts as a diuretic, it leaves you completely parched the next morning. Coconut water replaces lost electrolytes and potassium, which are crucial for nerve and cell function as well as hydration.

EXERCISE... WITH KETTLEBELLS

A full-body complex will get your blood pumping to flush toxins from your system and boost your metabolism to neutralise them faster. Do six reps of clean and presses, bent-over rows, racked squats, push presses and lunges. Repeat for three rounds.

SCENARIO C

Smashed your boss in a tequila slam-off and devoured a large doner

EAT... FRUITY PORRIDGE

You need to evict the toxins all that alcohol dumped in your body. Oats and yogurt contain cysteine, an amino acid that helps your liver perform the clean-up process, while the fructose in fruit will boost your energy and fight off a lingering headache.

EXERCISE... WITH YOUR BODYWEIGHT

When just hitting the snooze button feels like a mission, you've got to keep exercise simple. You needn't even leave the house for this four-minute drill. Start with squats, alternating 30 seconds of effort and rest. Then step it up with press-ups and lunges.

Workout 3 Shoulders

Build shoulders like boulders with six deltoid-blasting lifts



LATERAL RAISE

REPS 12 TEMPO 2010

Hold a light dumbbell in each hand by your sides, palms facing. Keep a very slight bend in your arms as you raise the dumbbells up and out in an arc until they're level with your shoulders. Return them slowly to the start.



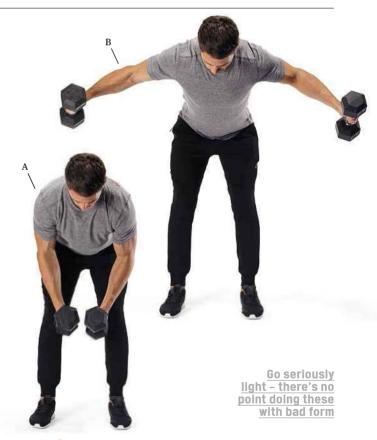
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SEATED DUMBBELL OVERHEAD PRESS

REPS 8 TEMPO 3010

Sit upright on a bench without resting your back against the support. Hold the weights so your upper arms are horizontal, palms facing forwards. Press the dumbbells straight up, then lower slowly.





REVERSE FLYE

REPS 12 TEMPO 201

Bend your knees slightly and hinge forward from the hips, keeping your back slightly concave and your shoulder blades back throughout. Holding light dumbbells with a slight bend in your arms, raise the weights up and out in an arc until they're level with your shoulders. Return them slowly to the start.

MILITARY PRESS

Stand with your feet together, holding the bar on top of your chest with hands just wider than shoulderwidth apart. Brace your core and glutes for balance and press the bar overhead, then lower.

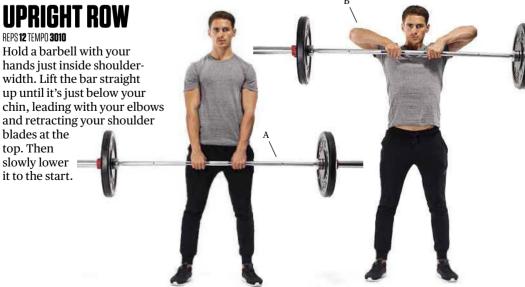




FRONT RAISE

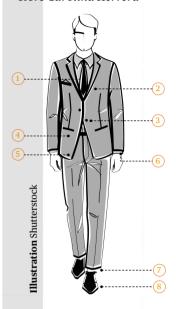
REPS 12 TEMPO 2010

Hold light dumbbells in front of your thighs, palms facing you. Keeping your arms straight, raise the dumbbells until they're level with your shoulders. Return them slowly to the start.



SUIT YOURSELF

Clothe your newly built body in a perfectly flattering suit with tips from Dimitrios Togias of designer store Carolina Herrera



- 1 The material of your tie and suit should always match, but not necessarily the colour. The width of the tie ought to match that of your lapels.
- (2) Match the nationality of the suit to your body type. Italian is skinny fit. British is broader but tapered to your waist. American is boxier for the muscular shape.
- (3) Leave the bottom button undone always. Undo all the buttons when sitting, to let the jacket hang either side of your chair.
- (4) Remove the light stitching from the jacket vent to let it open naturally, but leave the stitching in the pockets to keep the suit's fitted shape.
- (5) The bottom of the jacket should hang between the tips of your fingers and the middle of your palm.
- 6 Shirt sleeves should be 2.5cm longer than your cuff. When seated, your trousers should lift 4cm from your ankles.
- (7) If you're short, match your sock and belt colour to that of your suit to make vourself appear taller.
- 8 Grey is on trend for 2016. Match your grey suit with always-in-fashion brogues - light or dark brown, caramel or black.
- 9 Dry clean your suit no more than two or three times a year or it will lose its shape. Use a double-sided clothes brush to clean and refresh the fabric.
- (o) Store your suit in a fabric dust protector, not a plastic one, so it can breathe. III

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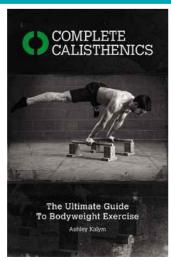


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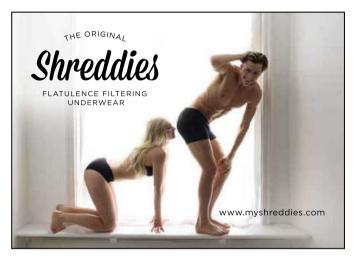


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Average day



David Rimmer

The 24-year-old British gymnast performs in Cirque du Soleil: Amaluna, which opens in January to mark 20 years of Cirque performing at the Royal Albert Hall

11am

Wake up

12pm

"We finish late so I generally wake up late. It's not a normal nine to five."

"I eat as soon as I arrive at work usually a salad."

"Pretty easy - we make our eyes

foundation so it catches the lights. Our

costumes are simple too: just jeans.

The idea is to look normal. Regular

guys... who flip through the air."

darker and put on lighter skin

Eat

1pm

Teeterboard training

4pm

Make-up

teeterboard is like a giant seesaw we use to propel each other into the air so we can do acrobatics. Training will either be fundamentals or rehearsing new parts of the show."

"Nerves are a factor before this, especially if something's changed in the routine. They're good nerves, though - they help me focus. My act is nine minutes long, but we often go

on stage between the other sections to keep

the crowd entertained while they set up."

4.30pm

First show

6.30pm

Mario Kart

8pm

Second show



"I'll eat right after my performance. Then we have an hour and a half before the next show. We sit around and let our bodies recover - we quite often play Mario Kart. It can get quite heated.'

"I have dinner, then do a workout designed to maintain the muscles I don't normally use on stage. The format varies, though - sometimes it's circuits, sometimes team workouts."

"The second show is identical to the first. It's so polished that even when things do go wrong the crowd hardly notice - we just move to the next part seamlessly."



Post-show

10.30pm

workout

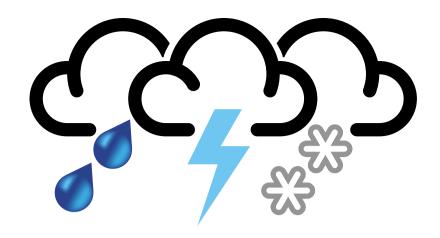
2am

Bed

"I'll watch some TV to unwind, but I make it a rule to get to bed no later than this. I mostly stick to it..."

IMPROVE YOUR LIFE

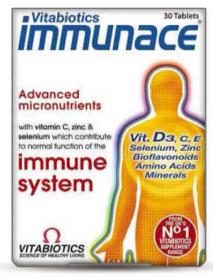
1 "Build ankle stability by jumping off boxes. I do it to help my landings." 2 "Balance one leg on a Bosu ball to help co-ordination." 3 "Strengthen your core with planks, dish holds and crunches."



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